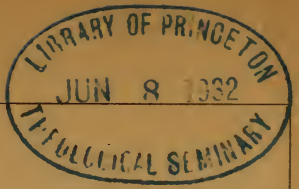


Daily
Counsellor.

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THE

✓
DAILY COUNSELLOR.

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BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

"THEY testimonies are my DELIGHT and my COUNSELLORS."

The Psalmist.

THIRD EDITION.

HARTFORD:
BROWN AND GROSS, PUBLISHERS.

1859.

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HARTFORD, CONN.

Preface.

THE treasures of God's Holy Word are revealed in its minutest portions. "One verse from the Psalms," said Luther, "is sufficient for the meditation of a day, and whoever finds, at the close of that day, that he has possessed himself of its sense and spirit, may consider the time well-spent."

On this principle, the present volume has been constructed. Its simple parodies or amplifications of the sacred precept selected for daily use throughout the year, may aid it in adhering to the retentive powers. A gentleman, far advanced in years, being asked what course he had pursued to preserve his memory unimpaired, replied, "I have every day, committed to her care a few lines of poetry."

The ensuing pages have no exclusive reference to any peculiar period of life. They seek alike the friendship of youth, maturity, and age. It will be readily seen, that they are less adapted to consecutive perusal, than to stated communion, according to their allotted portions, with serious, or solitary thought. To this methodical and familiar intercourse they aspire, more than to any meed of

literary ambition. Should their lyrical echoes of divine truth fail in conferring intellectual benefit, may they still be permitted to linger with no unhallowed influence in the temple of the soul.

L. H. S.

HARTFORD, CONN.,

September 1st, 1858.

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January.

Daily Counsellor.

JANUARY I.

"For signs and for seasons, for days and for years."

GENESIS, i: 14.

GIFT of untiring Goodness, bright, beautiful New Year!
We take thy wintry hand in ours, with smile of grateful
cheer,

We hail, we bid thee welcome, in glad and festive lays;
Thou com'st to us, o'er many a grave, to our Preserver,
praise!

We ask not where thy footsteps tend, His wisdom is our
guide,

We ask not what thy casket holds, He will o'er all preside,
So, wheresoe'er thou leadest on, still trustfully we'll tread,
Whether our untried path shall be with thorns or flowers
o'erspread;

If 'tis our lot to walk with thee, until thy journey close,
Or thine to lay us down at last, in undisturbed repose,
We may not know, we will not ask, the present is our care,
With all its duties, all its joys, its love and toil and
prayer.

Help us to cast aside the weights that clog the spirit's force,
Forget the things that are behind, and upward speed our
course,

Make us readier at life's lesson, make us readier for its end,
And fitter for that angel-train to which the blest ascend.

JANUARY II.

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."

GENESIS, i: 1.

God spake,—and startled chaos fled
With ancient night away,
The slumbering elements arose,
Obedient to His sway,

The kingly Sun came forth in state,
The stars their courses wove,
And, like a timid bride, the Moon
Look'd from her bower of love,

Fair Eden spread its cultured bound,
While through its stainless green
Man, and his dear companion walk'd,
Sole rulers of the scene.

So, thus in the beginning rose
This universal frame,
Glad Nature singing hymns of praise
To her Creator's name.

Oh! Maker of the earth and skies,
Remember me I pray,
This dying form,—this living soul,—
And cast them not away.

JANUARY III.

“How old art thou?”

GENESIS, xlvii: 8.

“How old art thou?”—Man measureth time
By things that fall away and die,
By sickled fields of Autumn’s prime,
Summer’s lost bloom or Winter’s sky.

Age from his span its luster takes,
The cheek resigns its roseate glow,
The form its grace, the hair its hue,
The brow its beauty;—*let them go.*

But the true heart can ne’er grow old,
Its eye is bright, tho’ youth be fled,
Its ear is never dull to sound,
Its lip can speak, when speech is dead.

By prayer, by alms, by written page,
By planted words of holy trust,
It quickeneth love from age to age,
It liveth, when the form is dust.

So count thou not thine age by tears,
Or smiles of Fortune’s fickle ray,
Nor say how old thou art in years,
Of waste and folly and decay,

But ever, with a steadfast eye
On Him from whom thy life proceeds,
Notch thou its seasons on the soul,
And tell its calendar by deeds.

JANUARY IV.

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

ECCLESIASTES, ix : 10.

Do what thou hast to do,
While thou hast eyes to see,
While thou hast ears to hear the word
That wisdom speaks to thee,
While thou hast feet to walk,
While thou hast voice to pray,
While thou hast Reason's guiding lamp
To understand thy way.

Do what thou hast to do,
And not to others leave,
They may thy wishes overrule,
Thy motives misconceive,
Thy purposes contest,
Thy plans with envy view ;
Now, while the life-tide heaves thy breast,
Do what thou hast to do.

Do what thou hast to do,
Before the night of gloom,
That swiftly wraps the sons of men
In darkness and the tomb ;
For though thy course may lead
O'er flowrets bright with dew,
There yawns thy cold, drear, silent bed,
Do what thou hast to do.

JANUARY V.

"It is appointed unto men once to die."

HEBREWS, ix : 27

To die! To die!—

'Tis but to change our place
 In this great Universe, and God is there :
 To take such form of being as He wills,
 And what He wills is wisdom rob'd in love.
 'Tis but to cling to the dear Saviour's hand,
 And tread, like Peter, the dark, whelming wave,
 That sweeps away all rootless things of earth.

But once to die!—Last lesson in time's book,
 Gird thee, weak soul! the trial-pang is brief,
 And Faith can triumph o'er its mystery.

To die! To die!—

'Tis but to lay aside
 What we have long'd to leave, this pain-girt flesh,
 In which the fires of desolation work,
 And smolder from our birth. 'Tis but to shut
 These eyes, and bask in light that hath no cloud,
 To lay this seal'd ear 'neath the moldering clod
 And hear the song of Heaven forevermore.

JANUARY VI.

“ Enoch walked with God.”

GENESIS, v: 22.

WALK with the Lord at morn,
When every scene is fair,
While opening buds the boughs adorn,
And fragrance fills the air ;
Before the rosy dawn, awake,
And in thy being's pride,
Thy first young blush of beauty, make
Omnipotence thy guide.

Walk with the Lord at noon,
When fervid suns are high,
And Pleasure, with her treacherous boon,
Allureth manhood's eye,
Then, with the diamond shield of prayer,
Thy soul's opposers meet,
And crush the thorns of sin and care
That pierce the pilgrim's feet.

Walk with the Lord at eve,
When twilight dews descend,
And Nature seems a shroud to weave,
As for some smitten friend ;

While slow the lonely moments glide
On mournful wing away,
Press closer, closer to His side,
His arm shall be thy stay.

Even shouldst thou linger here
Till midnight spreads its pall,
And Age laments with bosom drear
Its buried earthly all,
Thy withered eyes a signal bright
Beyond the grave shall see,
For He who maketh darkness light,
Thy God, shall walk with thee.

JANUARY VII.

“Where I am, there shall also my servant be.”

JOHN, xii: 26

THE Fathers!—I remember them
Within the House of Prayer,
Their thoughtful eye, devoutly bright,
And almond blossoms woven white
Amid their scattered hair.

In all their dignity of age
Methinks I see them now,
Prone to reprove the rash and vain,
A fearless justice written plain
Upon each reverend brow.

The Fathers!—I remember them,
Those statesmen grave and bold,
On whose true breasts their Country's weal,
Engraven as a signet seal,
Was valued more than gold.

Most beautiful it was to me,
Fast by their side to tread,
Still listening with observance meet,
Or gathering, seated at their feet,
The pearls their wisdom shed.

The ancient Fathers!—Where are they?
At board and hearth-stone fair,
Beneath their favorite elm trees' shade,
The sounding beach, the dewy glade,
We search,—they are not there.

Where are they?—Answer not, thou grave!
Brief will thy durance prove,
They are not thine,—for well we know
With Him they liv'd and serv'd below,
They are at home,—above.

JANUARY VIII.

“Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace.”

JOB, xxii: 21.

ACQUAINT thyself with God,
If thou would'st read aright
The book of nature, ever spread
Before thee, day and night;
If thou would'st fully learn
The wonders there displayed,
Enshrine its Author in thy heart,
And love what He hath made.

So shall the warbling grove,
The surge with mountain swell,
The Banian on the Indian sands,
The Lily in its dell,
Yea, every winged seed
That quickeneth 'neath the sod,
Teach heavenly wisdom, if thy soul
Acquaint itself with God.

There are who gather wealth
From many a storied page,
That tendeth but to wrinkling care,
Nor warms the frost of age,
But thou, with lowly mind,
Intent on sacred lore,
Acquaint thyself with God, and be
At peace forevermore.

JANUARY IX.

“Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid.”

I. CORINTHIANS, iii: 11.

BUILD'ST thou on wealth?—Its wing is ever spread,
Its dazzled votaries to elude and foil!
On Science? Lo! the lofty sage hath fled,
Like the pale lamp that lit his midnight toil,
Forgotten as the flower that decked the vernal soil.

Build'st thou on love?—The trusting heart it cheers,
While youth and hope entwine their garlands gay,
Yet hath it still an heritage of tears:
Build'st thou on fame? The dancing meteor's ray
Glides not on swifter wing to deeper night away.

Why on such sands thy spirit's temple rear?
How shall its base the wrecking billows shun?
Go, seek the Eternal Rock, with humble fear,
And on the tablet of each setting sun
Grave, with a diamond pen, some deed of duty done.

Young, art thou?—Then the words of wisdom weigh;
Mature?—The gathering ills of life beware;
Aged?—Oh! make His changeless arm thy stay,
Who saves the weakest suppliant from despair,
And bids the midnight tomb a robe of glory wear.

JANUARY X.

"He knoweth them that trust in Him."

NAHUM, i: 7.

GOD of the unfathom'd, unresisted deep,
 We trust in Thee, and know in whom we trust.
 God of the solemn stars, that tread so true
 The path by Thee appointed, every one,
 From the slight asteroid to the far orb
 That lists the watch-word, or the music-march
 Of neighboring planets round their monarch suns,
 Circling in glorious order,—lead our souls,
 From system unto system, up to Thee:
 That when unbodied, from this lower world
 Alone they launch, they may not lose the clue
 Guiding from sun to sun, thro' boundless space,
 The stranger-atom, to its place with Thee.

JANUARY XI.

"This do in remembrance of me."

LUKE, xxii: 19.

• COME, listening spirit, come!
 Good angels guide thy way,
 A Saviour bids thee to his feast,
 The gracious call obey.

No more the cold gray stone
 His sepulcher doth seal,
 'Tis roll'd away,—and He is risen,—
 He stoops our wounds to heal.

Come, waiting spirit, come!
 His hallowed board is spread,
 Turn from the false delights of earth
 And take the living bread,

And in its strength divine,
 Pass on thy pilgrim way,
 Make Him thy pole-star thro' the night,
 Thy sunbeam all the day,

Guarding with faithful heart
 The promise of his love,
 That those who share his feast below,
 Shall be his guests above.

JANUARY XII

“Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”
 I. CORINTHIANS, iii: 16.

KNOW ye not what dwelleth in you?
 Where your warmest wishes tend?
 When the love-tide swelleth in you
 O'er some dear, returning friend,
 And his fond embrace you share,
 Know ye not, if joy be there?

Know ye not, if God's own spirit
 A new life to you hath brought?
 Know ye not, if ye inherit
 What the world hath never taught?
 Whether clouds of mental night
 Have from darkness chang'd to light?

Father! by Thy wisdom teach us,
 Bid all mists of doubt depart,
 If we grope in error, reach us
 With a sunbeam of the heart,
 Set our souls from bondage free,
 Make them temple-shrines for Thee.

JANUARY XIII.

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold, tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich."

REVELATION, iii: 18.

TIME doth glide to Beauty's bower,
 With a thief's intent and a monarch's power,
 The frosted tress, and the faded rose,
 And the furrow'd brow, his deeds disclose,
 From the sparkling eye its diamond ray,
 And the lip its ruby, he beareth away.

But a casket there is, which he views in vain,
 With an eagle glance and a miser's pain,
 He gazes long at its golden key,—
 Spoiler, away! it may not be,
 'Tis the *wealth of the soul* and bound for that shore
 Where thou and thy wrecks shall be known no more.

JANUARY XIV.

"Walk as children of light."

EPHESIANS, v: 8.

THERE is a light that shineth
From God's own book divine,
And meets the lowly, searching soul
At every blessed line;
It warns where foes and dangers
In fearful ambush lie,
It lamp-like shows where sins and snares
Elude the traveler's eye,
It guideth o'er the desert,
When earthly leaders fail,
It guideth o'er the surging sea,
When clouds and blasts prevail,
It guideth to the ark of Christ,
It giveth day for night,
To those who in obedience walk
As children of the light.

There is a beam that breaketh
O'er western hills afar,
And holdeth forth a crescent pure,
Like holy, watchful star,
Reflected from the seraph's wing
Around the throne that soar,
Reflected from the snowy robes
Of loved ones gone before,
It cheers the heart that weepeth
Beside the burial sod,
It meets the lifted eye that turns
In contrite prayer to God,

It waxeth brighter as this world
Fades from the pilgrim's sight.
Then with a glorious gladness walk
As children of the light.

JANUARY XV.

"Who can tell a man, what shall be after him under the Sun?"

ECCLESIASTES, vi: 12.

If there were any who could tell that tale,
Why need he wish to hear?
Hath he not known
Enough of folly, vanity, and wrong,
Enough of baffled trust, and fleeting joy,
To cast their memory willingly away,
With his clay vesture in the quiet tomb?

"What shall be after him?"

Why the same things
That were before him,—vanquished purposes,
Unsatisfying honors, empty fame,
Fond treasures that took wing and fled away,
Knowledge that sow'd with toil, and reap'd but wind,
And Hope that struck its anchor in the rock
Which bides the latest storm.

The present time
 Is what concerns thee, Pilgrim!
Not an hour
 But hath its sky-reporting agencies,
 Its faculties for good, its risk of sin,
 Its chance for mercy, and its call for prayer.

The Present, lighted by the thoughtful Past,—
 Let that suffice.

The *Future* is with God.

JANUARY XVI.

"The fear of the Lord is his treasure."

ISAIAH, xxxiii: 6.

WHAT is man's treasure? Hoarded gold,
 Begirt with fears and cares?
 Houses, and merchandise, and lands?
 They pass to stranger heirs.

Ships? With their snowy pinions spread,
 They proudly leave the shore;
 But, smitten by the wrecking gale,
 They sink to rise no more.

Fashion? The butterfly was gay,
 Ere in the frost it fell.
 Beauty and strength? The fever's breath
 Their straw-like trust can tell

Fame? On the fickle lip it dies.
Friendship? Alas, the cheat.
Love? Like the dove's soft wing it comes,
And glides away as fleet.

Power? Of the crownless kings inquire,
Who died with none to weep.
A name in history? Who shall read,
Or who the memory keep?

Yet when the strong archangel's voice
Time's funeral shall proclaim,
And earth and skies, like blackened scroll,
Parch in the doomsday flame,

With the true soul to heaven allied,
One treasure shall endure,
For God's most holy fear hath made
That priceless treasure sure.

JANUARY XVII.

"Noah became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."

HEBREWS, xi: 7.

THOU hast believed and triumphed; Thou hast seen
God's truth made manifest, though all around
Withstood or doubted; thou did'st trust serene,
And when a sinful, skeptic world was drowned,

In thy lone vessel, brave the seas and skies,
 Holding thy helmless way o'er Ocean's breast,
 And then, in glorious majesty arise
 The rainbow round thee, and the storm at rest.

Vouchsafe us strength, Oh Father! so to keep
 Our steadfast course o'er Time's tempestuous sea,
 And when the deluge-waters o'er us sweep,
 Whelming our earthly hopes—repose on Thee,

Until we joyous hail,—all perils o'er,
 The peace-branch and the dove from Heaven's approach-
 ing shore.

JANUARY XVIII.

“Commune with your own heart, on your bed and be still.”

PSALMS, iv: 4.

REST! weary thought, awhile,
 By care and labor tost,
 For thy freshest plumes are soil'd with dust
 And the fountain hath fail'd of thy fondest trust,
 And thy pilgrim-staff is lost.

Come, hope! with flagging wing,
 Like the Ark-dove turn again,
 O'er a trackless waste thy flight hath sped,
 Thou hast sought the living among the dead,
 'Tis fit thy search were vain.

Thou stricken heart, return!
 What was thy chastening rod?
 The faithless prop, or the shaft of guile?
 The ice-cold glance, or the treacherous smile?
 Go! speak of thy wounds to God.

Turn, sad and musing soul!
 This hallow'd hour was given
 To gird thee anew for the race of life,
 And to cheer a clime of change and strife
 With a gleam of the peace of heaven.

JANUARY XIX.

"I will make them joyful in my House of Prayer."

ISAIAH, lvi: 7.

COME, broken hearts,—and bring your woes
 Unto the House of Prayer,
 The Heavenly Healer waits for those
 Who spread their sorrows there.

Though every secret pang you feel
 To Him is fully known,
 He fain would have His children kneel
 Confiding at His Throne.

Had ye a cherished hope that shed
 Its blighted blossoms wide?
 A treasure on the winds that fled?
 A joy that drooped and died?

And knew ye not, that earth and dust
 Would thus the soul forsake?
 Rise from this vanity of trust,
 Your Saviour's cross to take.

For Him your noblest powers employ,
 To Him confess your care,
 So shall you learn what holy joy
 Comes from the Hour of Prayer.

JANUARY XX.

"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another."

ROMANS, xiii : 8.

"OWE *no man any thing.*"

Why should we wish
 To keep what is not ours? What right have we
 Unto the usufruct of others' toil,
 Unrecompensed? 'Twere better to forego
 All luxury, all circumstance of wealth,
 Palatial mansion, or patrician robe,
 Than have the secret curses of the poor,
 And, with the fraud-spot on the soul, go forth
 Unto the clear Eye of the Perfect Judge.

"*Owe no man any thing, except to love.*"

The debt of holy love hath no remorse:
 It bringeth blessedness.

For God is love,
 And he who dwells in love doth dwell with Him!

—Take freely of the fountain that our Lord
 Open'd on earth,—“peace and good-will to man.”
 Love's debt is never fully paid, till Heaven
 Unlocks the exchequer of unrusting gold;
 But he who loveth all whom God hath made
 Hath foretaste of the bliss that ne'er shall end.

JANUARY XXI.

“He hath done all things well.”

MARK, vii: 37.

Dost see the cherished hope depart,
 That budded full and fair?
 Thy hoarded heritage of joy,
 Like bubble, break in air?
 Oh Brother! 'tis a land of change,
 Wherein we mortals dwell,
 But He who casts our lot is wise,
He hath done all things well.

Dost stand beside the silent mound,
 Where thy heart's idol lies,
 Who wakes no more thy hand to clasp,
 Nor heed, thy bursting sighs?
 Oh Sister! Heaven reclaims its loan!
 Look up! thine anguish quell,
 The Saviour of thy soul is kind,
He hath done all things well.

Dost feel the life within thee fade?
The senses strive in vain?
Strange snows thy wasted locks invade,
And age thy limbs enchain?
Oh Christian friends! let no regret
The approaching transit tell,
Look unto him who conquered Death,
He hath done all things well.

JANUARY XXII.

“Remembering your labor of love and patience of hope.”

1ST THESSALONIANS, i: 3

“SING me a song,” said the little girl,
As she sate on her mother’s knee,
“For it makes me glad when you sweetly smile,
And softly sing to me.”
“Tell me a tale,” said the rosy boy,
As he stood by his mother’s side,
But she turned away to the cradle-bed
Where her waking infant cried.
“Wait my darlings,” she tenderly said,
And kissed the babe as it clung to her breast,
So the little ones quietly bow’d the head,
For they felt that their mother’s time was best;
And the heavenly seed of patience fell
Into their hearts, and rooted well.

At the door, an aged man appeared,
His locks were silvery white,
And the lady rose when she saw her sire
With a smile of loving light,
She drew for him the great arm-chair,
And with voice like music clear,
Pour'd a gentle tide of cheering thought
Into his deafen'd ear,
Till he forgot that his blood was cold,
And talked with glee as in times of old.
So the children learn'd, as from lustrous page,
The holy text of respect for age,
And the blessing of God is the fruit, 'tis said,
Of reverence paid to the hoary head.

JANUARY XXIII.

"A pure river of water of life, clear as crystal."

REVELATION, xiii: 1.

GIVE me to drink thereof,
Amid my toil and pain,
For those who freely taste that stream
Shall never thirst again

Give me to bathe therein,
That so my soul may be
Cleans'd from all sin, Oh God, and made
A temple meet for thee.

Give me to share the fruits
 Of the life-tree that grows
 Upon its borders, and whose leaves
 Do heal the nations' woes.

Give me to launch my bark
 Upon its crystal tide,
 And anchor where its fountain springs,
 The Eternal Throne beside.

JANUARY XXIV.

"I will give him the morning-star."

REVELATION, ii : 28.

THE morning-star of peace,
 That thro' the misty dawn,
 Looks forth with golden eye
 O'er mountain, hill, and lawn,
 Though gathering clouds, confus'd and grim,
 Like warriors' frown,—I'll give it him,
 His shall it be

The morning-star of hope,—
 It gleams with diamond spark,
 It gilds its own blest sphere,
 Though all the world be dark,
 Though its proud throngs in tumult live,
 That star of hope,—to him I'll give,
 His shall it be.

The morning-star of love,
That lifts its perfect ray,
When the believer goes
From time to endless day,
When to these skies, his eye grows dim
In Death's eclipse,—I'll give it him,
His shall it be.

JANUARY XXV.

"The reapers are the angels."

MATTHEW, xiii: 39.

HASTE, ere the gathered shades
Fall on thee from the tomb where none may work,
And throw a shelter o'er the orphan head,
Cheer the sad mourner, light the heathen soul,
And justify thy Maker's husbandry;
So that His angels, who go forth to reap
Earth's ripened harvest for the judgment day,
Put not the sickle in with grief, to find
The tares for burning o'ertop the wheat.

JANUARY XXVI.

"Let us make us a Name, lest we be scattered abroad."

GENESIS, xi: 4.

MAKE to thyself a name,
Not with the breath of clay,
Which, like the broken, hollow reed,
Doth sigh itself away;
Not with the fame that vaunts
The tyrant on his throne,
And hurls its stigma on the soul
That God vouchsafes to own.

Make to thyself a name,
Not such as wealth can weave,
Whose warp is but a thread of gold,
That dazzles to deceive;
Not with the tints of love
Form out its letters fair,
That scroll within thy hand shall fade
Like him who placed it there.

Make to thyself a name,
Not in the sculptured aisle,
The marble oft betrays its trust,
Like Egypt's lofty pile;
But ask of him who quelled
Of death, the victor-strife,
So write it on the blood-bought page
Of everlasting life.

JANUARY XXVII.

“Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.”

ISAIAH, 1: 10.

ART thou a Christian? Though thy cot
Be rude, and poverty thy lot,
A wealth is thine which earth denies,
A treasure boundless as the skies,
Gold and the diamond fade with shame
Before thy casket's deathless flame.
Heir of high Heaven! how canst thou sigh
For gilded dross and vanity?

Art thou a Christian? doomed to roam
Far from thy friends and native home?
O'er trackless wilds uncheered to go,
With none to share an exile's woe?
Where'er thou find'st a Father's care,
Thy country and thy home are there.
How canst thou then a stranger be,
Surrounded by His family?

Art thou a Christian? mid the strife
Of years mature, and burdened life?
Thy heaven-born faith its shield shall spread,
To guard thee in the hour of dread.
Thorns 'neath thy bleeding feet may spring,
Unkindness strike its scorpion sting,
Yet in thy soul a beacon light
Shall guide thy pilgrim steps aright,
And balm from God's own fountain flow
To heal the wounds of earthly woe.

JANUARY XXVIII.

"What is that to thee?—follow thou me."

JOHN, xxi: 22.

DOth dark despondence seize thy mind
 When adverse winds prevail,
 As though the guardian care of heaven
 In faithfulness could fail?
 Fear'st thou the want of earthly good?
 God will provide,
 The ark of promise is his own,
 His hand shall guide.

Doth vain philosophy intrude,
 By pride and error bred?
 Do doubt, and unbelief, and pain
 In her chill footsteps tread?
 Throng they around the cross of Christ
 That hope to dim?
 What has thy faith to do with these?
Follow thou him.

That voice which once to Peter spake
 The grave rebuke, divine,
 And bore repentance to his soul,
 A message hath for thine:—
 "What is this brief and pageant world,
 Spirit, to thee?
 High heir of everlasting life,
Follow thou me."

JANUARY XXIX.

"Out of weakness, were made strong."

HEBREWS, xi: 34.

OH! girt with peril, and but feebly arm'd,
 Too often by the glozing tempter charm'd,
 In blindness led to roam where serpents glide,
 And miss the beckoning of an angel-guide,
 Doomed at thine Eden-gate a sword to see,
 Precluding entrance to thy hope and thee,
 Cling to the Cross! it hath a power divine,
 Though Sinai's thunders roll and lightnings shine.
 Cling to the Cross! thy Saviour's pattern heed,
 And make thy life a comment on thy creed.

JANUARY XXX.

"He went round about the villages, teaching."

MARK, vi: 6.

GREEN were thy vales, fair Palestine,
 And clear thy streamlets flow,
 Where the Redeemer's sacred feet
 Went traveling long ago.

Far from the city's gorgeous streets,
 He turned with musing thought,
 And to the villages went forth,
 And by the wayside taught.

He taught the peasant at the plough,
 The beggar on the road;
 In tangled wild, by flood or field,
 The seed of heaven he sowed.

He taught them where the fig-tree boughs
 In luscious fragrance wave,
 And when amid the sterile heath,
 The wondrous food he gave.

So may we, Lord, with patient hand,
 Thy blessed precepts spread,
 And strew o'er every heathen strand
 The gospel's living bread,

And grant us, 'mid our mission toils,
 To hear thy cheering voice,
 And, like Judea's villagers,
 Behold thee, and rejoice!

JANUARY XXXI.

"Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

JOB, xiii: 15.

QUESTION not God, frail Creature of the Dust!
 Make no conditions what thy lot shall be,
 Ask thou no pledge of Him. Be still, and trust!
 Trust and be joyful, for his love is free:
 Pass on in faith, where'er He bids thee go,
 Gird thee with truth, in sunlight or in shade,
 Uproot the weed of self, and meekly sow
 Sweet seeds of love, for all His hand hath made.
 Build not on rituals,—make His will thy text,
 And so shall all be well, in this life or the next.

February.



FEBRUARY I.

“To do good and to communicate, forget not.”

HEBREWS, xiii: 16.

“WHAT crone art thou who wak'st the tempest's rage,
Head white with snows, and forehead grooved with age?
Whose frosty breath upon thy lip congeals?
Whose torpid heart no warm emotion feels?”

Then Winter answered with a tone severe,
“A king am I o'er Nature's ravaged sphere,
I quell the freedom of her wandering streams,
Her warblers' music, and her summer dreams,
I wreck her garlands with un pitying eye,—
Yet some there are, who all my power defy,
Who hail my scepter with serene delight,
With cheerful music cheat the halting night,
With storied page, or kindly welcomed guest,
Or smile of love that thrills the exulting breast.

But thou who seemest so much to dread my sway,
List to a spell that turns its gloom away ;—
Seek out the cells where pain and penury bend,
Where through wide chasms the drifting snows descend,
Where the sick father in despondence sighs,
The famished mother hears her infant's cries,
Or sees her children from the blast retreat,
With shivering forms, and cold, uncovered feet.

And if from scenes like these the thought should rise
To imitate the mercy of the skies,

With seraph zeal thy liberal alms bestow,
 And scatter blessings o'er the path of woe:
 For deeds like these shall soften Winter's sting,
 And change its ices to the glow of Spring."

FEBRUARY II.

"Thy faith hath made thee whole."

MARK, x: 52.

SIGHTLESS, and sorrowful, and scorn'd,
 Begging beside the way,
 O'erlook'd in Pleasure's giddy dance,
 Or by some scanty dole, perchance,
 Remembered, day by day,

Oh, poor blind man! a gem was thine,
 Which they who pass'd thee by,
 Discovered not,—for closely hid
 Thy tattered garments' fold amid,
 It mock'd the worldling's eye.

Faith in the Son of God was thine,
 That ray of quenchless light,
 Faith in His power, who bow'd so low
 To tents of clay, and forms of woe,
 Faith that is turned to sight.

But who the speechless joy may tell
 That overwhelm'd thy soul,
 When sweet as music's heavenly swell,
 Those accents of approval fell,
 "Thy faith hath made thee whole."

FEBRUARY III.

“Grieve not thy father as long as he liveth.”

ECCLESIASTICUS, iii: 12.

AH! grieve him not, whose silver hairs
 Thin o'er his wasted temples stray,
 Grieve not thy sire, when time impairs
 The glory of his manhood's sway.

His tottering steps with reverence aid,
 Bind his wan brow with honor's wreath,
 And let his deafened ear be made
 The harp where filial love shall breathe.

What though his pausing mind partake
 The evils of its house of clay,
 Though wearied, blinded memory break
 The casket where her treasures lay,

Still with prompt arm his burdens bear,
 Bring heavenly balm his wounds to heal,
 And with affection's watchful care,
 The error, that thou mark'st, conceal.

Know'st thou how oft those powerless arms
 Have clasped thee to his shielding breast,
 When infant woes, or childish harms,
 Thy weak, unguarded soul distress?

Know'st thou how oft his accents strove
 Thine uninstructed mind to aid?
 How oft a parent's prayer of love,
 Hath pierced dense midnight's darkest shade?

Grieve not thy father, till he die,
 Lest, when he sleeps in earth's cold breast,
 The record of his lightest sigh
 Should prove a dagger to thy rest.

For if this holiest debt of love
 Forgotten or despised should be,
 He whom thou call'st thy *Sire* above,
 Will bend a Judge's frown on thee.

FEBRUARY IV.

"If thieves came to thee, if robbers by night, would they not have stolen till they had enough?"

OBADIAH, 5.

PROTECTION through the night
 Of silence dark and deep,
 When lies the strong man like the babe,
 Helpless, in arms of sleep;

Protection through the night,
 When roams the secret foe,
 The robber prowling for his prey,
 And arm'd for murderous blow;

Thou hast vouchsafed us, Lord,
 Our guardian Friend above,
 Thou of the never-slumbering eye,
 The ever-watchful love.

Let our first waking thoughts
 In gratitude adore,
 And be our renovated powers
 Thy servants evermore.

FEBRUARY V.

"A little lower than the angels."

HEBREWS, ii: 7.

Not yet, with harps that never tire
We tread our devious ways,
But with the harmony of soul
That hourly whispers *praise*,

Not yet, with wings that night and day
Jehovah's work fulfill,
But with these willing hands and feet
Intent to do His will,

Not yet, with smiles that never know
A change from sorrow's sphere,
Not yet with eyes that never show
The darkening of a tear,

But in the same paternal school,
We both, instruction find,
They the first class,—the angel grade,—
And we a step behind.

A "little lower" now, but soon
Beside them, hand in hand,
We, of their "goodly company"
Before the throne shall stand.

FEBRUARY VI.

'If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.'

PROVERBS, xxiv: 10

CLOUDS that o'er the noon-tide sweep,
 Storms that vex the billowy deep,
 Blights that blast the cherish'd bower,
 Frosts that nip the opening flower,
 Shafts that fright the tuneful grove,
 Frowns that chill the glance of love,
 If they meet thee, faint thou not,
 Such must mark the pilgrim's lot.

From the cloud the sun shall break,
 Ocean sleep like peaceful lake,
 Spring recall with magic tread
 What the frost-king left for dead,
 Warbling birds their nests resume,
 Flickering love its smile relume,
 Small the strength that faints in grief
 At adversity so brief.

FEBRUARY VII.

"No room for them in the inn."

LUKE, ii: 7.

THOU who on earth did'st find,
 No room in Bethlehem's inn,
 Say, can'st Thou deign thy home to make
 In these, our hearts of sin?

Too narrow are they? Break
 Of bigotry the fence,
 And cast the idols out, and drive
 The money-changers thence.

Are they too wintry? Strike
 The flint with steel divine,
 Kindling a flame of holy love
 To comfort and refine.

Are they too dark, my Lord?
 The lamp of knowledge light,
 And bid it through their windows stream
 With radiance pure and bright:

So, though thine infant head,
 Wrapped in its veil of clay,
 Found only in a manger rude
 A pillow where to lay,
 Now o'er a ransomed host
 Exalted high to reign,
 Come,—Saviour,—to our hearts and dwell
 With all thine angel train.

FEBRUARY VIII.

“The sea hath spoken.”

ISAIAH, xxiii: 4.

LIFT up thy thunder-voice, thou solemn sea!
 I fain would be a pupil of thy lore.
 —Earth speaks of *man*. Her castellated tower,
 Palace, and obelisk, and pyramid,
 All tell of man.

Yea, even the changeful sky,
 Of richest garniture, the purple robe
 For morning, and the noon-day tissued dress
 Of blue and silver, and the evening garb,
 Spangled with stars, or broider'd by the moon,
 Do sometimes seem (may Heaven forgive the thought,)
 Like a fair woman in her coquetry.
 ——But thou dost speak alone of God,—thou sea!
 Thou wonder-working, mortal-mocking sea;
 Teach me of Him, whose name is on thy lip,
 And hid in thy deep heart.

I bow me down,
 Wooing thy billows in their fearful play,
 And when dense darkness shades their crested heads,
 Kneel in my utter nothingness to Him
 Who counts thy congregated world of waves
 But as a noteless dew-drop.

FEBRUARY IX.

“A deep sleep from the Lord was fallen upon them.”

1ST SAMUEL, xxvi: 12.

THEY fell asleep. The weary heat
 And burden of the day
 Oppress'd them, and their failing feet
 Have halted by the way.

Some, in the hallowed place of graves,
 Some, where the prairies spread,
 And some, in ocean's coral caves,
 Have found a dreamless bed.

While others, 'mid the Arctic pines,
 And over drifting snows,
 Or where the sunny tropic shines,
 Share undisturbed repose.

Let grief forego her hopeless cares,
 Nor in despondence weep,
 A holy hush should sure be theirs
 Whom God hath laid to sleep.

FEBRUARY X.

"He is able also to save them to the uttermost."

HEBREWS, vii : 25.

THE *uttermost*,—upon the skirts
 Of the far host of life,
 Who share not, on the heights of power
 Its glory, or its strife ;
 They bear the burden and the toil,
 Nor banner lift, nor plume,
 Yet there's an Eye that marks them all
 Amid their rayless gloom.

The *uttermost*,—the last in sin,
 The lost, whom men condemn,
 And banish from the realm of hope,
 He careth even for them ;
 He listeneth at their prison-grate
 For prayer, or contrite sigh,
 He knocketh long, he knocketh late,
 Even where is no reply.

The *uttermost*,—till life recedes,
 Even to the latest sand
 Of time's most frail and brittle glass,
 He still doth waiting stand ;
 He bendeth o'er the dying man
 Till the glazed eye is dim,
 He saveth to the uttermost,
 That all may trust in Him.

FEBRUARY XI.

"In the garden a new sepulcher."

JOHN, xix : 41.

MOURN not ye, whose babe hath found
 Purer skies, and firmer ground,
 Flowers of bright, perennial hue,
 Free from thorns, and fresh with dew,
 Founts that tempests never stir,
 Gardens without sepulcher.

Mourn not ye, whose babe hath sped,
 From this region of the dead,
 To yon blessed cherub band,
 Golden lute and glorious land,
 Where no tempter's sinful art
 Clouds the brow, or stains the heart.

Knowledge in that clime doth grow
 Free from weeds of pride and woe,
 Peace, whose olive never fades,
 Love, undimmed by sorrow's shades,
 Joy, which mortals may not share,—
Mourn not ye, whose babe is there.

FEBRUARY XII.

"Leaving us an example,—that ye should follow His steps."

1ST PETER, ii: 21

HE taught as with His heavenward eye,
His holy smile of guiding ray,
Sweet parable and precept high,
To choose the strait and narrow way

He went before,—the path He chose
Was that which lowliest pilgrims tread,
A patient brotherhood with those
Who had not where to lay the head.

He crush'd within their dark retreat
The thorns of tyranny and pride,
While 'neath His bare and bleeding feet
Ambition's trampled laurel died.

To mournful Olivet He turn'd,
His temples bathed in midnight dew,
And gazing stars astonish'd burn'd
The meekness of their Lord to view.

He walk'd upon the raging deep
Where vengeful passions foam and toss,
And bade their wildest billows creep,
As vassals, round the blood-stain'd Cross.

So teach us, Lord! in faith to live,
In hope to toil,—in love to bear,—
Nor like the bold disciple strive,
Without Thine aid, the wave to dare;

So guide us o'er this treacherous shore,
 Where quicksands hide, and surges break,
 That all our earthly wanderings o'er,
 Thy fold we reach, thy rest partake.

FEBRUARY XIII.

"Until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts."

2ND PETER, i: 19.

OH, dawn of blessed light,
 That through the shades of night,
 With radiance pale,
 Com'st like a white-robed guest,
 To eye and brow and breast,
 We bid thee hail.

Not as to orbs made blind,
 That gaze, but may not find
 Thy cheering beam,
 To us, from tower and tree,
 Thy tender tracery
 Doth gently gleam.

Not as to those who grope,
 Devoid of heaven's high hope,
 In Pagan night,
 Thou visitest our land,
 For a dear, pierced Hand
 Hath given it light.

Dim dawn, with tresses gray,
 How soon thou fad'st away,—

Opening the gate
 Through which, in glory born,
 Rides forth the sceptered morn,
 In royal state.

Sweet gift from Him above,
 Whose unforgetful love
 Doth never sleep:
 Unto His name be praise,
 While changeful nights and days
 Their order keep.

FEBRUARY XIV.

"Two are better than one."

ECCLESIASTES, iv: 9.

THIS transient life, the poets say,
 At best, is but a wintry day:
 Yet when two hearts with courage true
 Unite to dare its tempests through,
 And catch the sunbeams as they flow,
 With added warmth, each beam shall glow,
 For hallow'd love its light shall lend
 When clouds grow dark, or rains descend.
 Yea, more,—if with combin'd intent
 On Bethlehem's star their eyes are bent,
 If by the chart a Saviour gave
 Their course they steer o'er rock and wave,
 Unscath'd they'll ride the billow's foam,
 His smile their strength,—His Heaven their home.

FEBRUARY XV.

“This is my commandment, that ye love one another.”

JOHN, xv: 12.

WE keep the old commandment, “eye for eye,
And tooth for tooth,” striving with sleepless zeal
To pluck the mote from out our brother’s creed,
Till charity’s neglected plant doth need
The water-drop and die.

We watch and weigh
The doctrine, till the blessed spirit ’scapes,
And in the measuring of our cummin-seeds
O’erlook the shining of that star of love
Which never sets.

Yea, even the heathen tribes,
Who from our mission-zeal, ’mid chaos dark,
First heard the “*fiat-lux*,”—and joyous come
Like Lazarus from his grave,—bewildered ask
What guide to follow, for they see the men
They took for angels, seek the banner’d field
For Paul, or for Apollos, warring there,
Till they forget that they are one in Christ.

Dear Saviour, grave on our obedient hearts
Thy new commandment,—that its simple clue
Guiding us safely through life’s labyrinth,
May reach Heaven’s gate.

FEBRUARY XVI.

“Ruth clave unto her.”

RUTH. i: 14.

“WHERE thou goest, I will go,”
Thus the Moabitess said,
“Where thou dwellest, I will dwell,
Where thou lodgest, rest my head.
Where thou diest, I will die,
Where thou mak'st thy grave, wilt lie.”

Sweetly stole those filial words
O'er the widow'd mother's heart,
Giving strength her griefs to bear,
Power from cherish'd scenes to part;
Not an exile now to roam,
Light should cheer her childless home.

Blessed Love of Gratitude!
Not by blinded instinct led,
Not on selfish gain intent,
Not by fickle dew-drops fed;
Man may fail thy worth to tell,
Angels comprehend thee well.

Blessed Love of Gratitude!
With thy fair array of graces,
Welcomed shalt thou be above,
Where the seraphs veil their faces;
Where they cry with one accord,
Holy! Holy! is the Lord.

FEBRUARY XVII.

“Marvel not my brethren, if the world hate you.”

1ST JOHN, iii: 13.

SAY, what avails it him, whose course
Is upward like the unresting flame,
Though shafts of malice spend their force
Against the texture of his fame;

Or what avails the taunt of sin
That falsehood o'er his deeds may roll,
If truth's pure diamond dwell within
The crystal casket of his soul;

Or what avails the scowl of hate
To pitying, Nature's pilgrim-guest,
For whom approving seraphs wait,
In bowers of everlasting rest.

Yet must he daily strive to keep
Uncaus'd, the world's condemning frown,
Nor let its memory rankle deep,
But firmly, kindly, live it down,

And following still that Glorious Friend,
For whom the crown of thorns was wove,
To evil,—gentleness extend,
And conquer enmity by love.

FEBRUARY XVIII.

"Touched with the feeling of our infirmities."

HEBREWS, 4: 15.

YON stranger see,—who lonely roves,
 An exile from the land he loves,
 Oh Thou! who here on earth didst tread
 Without a home to lay thy head,
 And only 'neath one cottage shade,
 In Bethany, wert welcome made,
 Speak peace, where deep despondence sighs,
 And point to mansions in the skies.

The mourner droops,—with heaving breast,
 Low, where his buried idols rest,—
 Dear Saviour! who didst meekly shed
 The tear of grief o'er friendship's bed,
 And with the sorrowing sisters share
 The balm of sympathy and prayer,
 Look downward,—let thy mercy flow,
 And deign to soothe the pang of woe.

The death-struck, on his couch of pain,
 Finds every earthly solace vain,
 The eye is glaz'd,—the spirit faint,
 Remember, Lord! thy suffering saint,
 Thou who didst tread the shadowy vale,
 Mid fearful shapes, and horrors pale,
 Infuse thy strength when nature dies,
 And to thy presence bid him rise.

FEBRUARY XIX.

"Clouds and darkness are round about Him:—righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne."

PSALMS, xcvi: 2.

MY God, I would not doubt
Thy wisdom or thy grace,
Although the clouds may sometimes veil
The brightness of thy face.

I would not dread the hand
That doth my life control,
Even if the instruments are sharp
That search and try the soul.

I would not shrink to yield
The treasure or the friend,
That with infinitude of love
Thou didst vouchsafe to lend.

I would not dare resist
Thy counsels or thy sway,
Beggar, and borrower on thine earth,
And soon to pass away.

I would not e'er forsake
The strength that can not fail,
A poor, blind wanderer of the dust,
An atom on the gale.

I would not plant my hope
Where all things change and die;
But, anchored on thy word of truth,
Look upward to the sky.

FEBRUARY XX.

"Which things the Angels desire to look into."

1ST PETER, i: 12.

ANGELS, great in power and might,
 Dwellers in a realm of light,
 Who the bidding of their King
 Do with never-tireless wing,
 Lost in wonder, bend to see
 Jesus in humility,
 Robed in clay, and manger-born
 To a life of woe and scorn.

But on man, who spurns the Cross,
 Counts a Saviour's love as dross,
 Rushes madly toward the tomb,
 Reckless of a sinner's doom,
 With more deep and sad amaze,
 Fixes their ethereal gaze,
 Than on Calvary's flinty head,
 Though its terrors woke the dead.

FEBRUARY XXI.

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee."

ISAIAH, xxvi: 3.

THE rains descended, and the floods
 My soul's foundations tried,
 While one by one each cherished hope
 Like waning rush-lights died,

And, lone and desolate, I heard
 The elemental din;
 Yet light amid the darkness broke,—
 A sunbeam shone within.

Out on the crested surge I rode,
 When the great sea arose,
 And challenged with its thunder-cry
 The stormy winds as foes;
 Then barks were wrecked, and men went down
 Beneath the billowy brine,
 But, in that tempest of despair,
 The sunbeam still was mine,

The stay on God,—I'll hold it fast,
 In peril and in pain,
 Until that glorious Sun arise
 That ne'er shall set again.
 Oh when, by death's grim phantom led
 I tread the shadowy vale,
 Still may that *perfect peace* be mine,
 Though flesh and heart should fail.

FEBRUARY XXII.

"Mark the perfect man and behold the upright."

PSALMS, xxxvii: 37.

WEEP for the smitten bud that falls
 Untimely from the stem,
 And ne'er in fond affection's eye
 Must glass its glowing gem,
 Nor in its folded bosom know
 The joy that noontide suns bestow.

Weep for the reprobate, who steals
 Unhonor'd to the dust,
 Life's highest purpose unachiev'd,
 And scorn'd its holiest trust,—
 Yes, weep for him who stain'd the scroll
 And mock'd the Giver of his soul.

But as for him, whose mortal span
 Completes its perfect round,
 His gifts well-used,—his length of days
 With hallow'd luster crown'd,
 No tears for him,—he gains the bliss
 Of more exalted spheres than this:

No tears,—save what the heart of love
 For its own loss must weep,
 But yield his fame to History's hand
 For unborn time to keep;
 Lift high the page, that earth shall see
 What Heaven can give, and man may be.

FEBRUARY XXIII.

“Continual weeping shall go up.”

JEREMIAH, xlviii: 5.

AGE,—wan with sorrow, bows him down,
 Strong manhood learns to weep,
 A tear is on the infant's cheek,
 Even 'mid its cradle-sleep;

Grief ever weepeth,—'tis her wont,
Like an o'erflowing tide,
Love, in the boasted triumph-hour
A woman's heart doth hide;

Hope weepeth,—to the treacherous sands
She gave her anchor's trust,
Joy weepeth,—for her garlands fade
And withering fall to dust;

Ambition weepeth,—laurel-crown'd,
No other world he knows
To conquer with insatiate pride,
He weepeth as he goes.

Oh Thou, who from the angel-choirs
Dost bend thy gracious ear,
And listen to the blended sound
Of prayer and dropping tear,

Have pity on this weeping globe
As on its course it strays,
Have pity on its mourning race
And turn their tears to praise.

FEBRUARY XXIV.

"Ye that fear the Lord,—hope for good."

ECCLESIASTICS, ii: 9.

Do the clouds around thee gather,
 Making dark thy solitude?
 Each one hath an inward shining,
 Each one hath a silver lining,
 Hope for good!

Hath thy trusted friend deceived thee,
 Who in sunshine near thee stood?
 Christ hath borne that woe before thee,
 Let His patient love restore thee,
 Hope for good!

Doth the child thy bosom nourish'd,
 Leave thee to Misfortune's flood?
 All unpitying see thee languish?
 Still, amid that keenest anguish,
 Hope for good.

Should all cherish'd props forsake thee
 While earth's tempests threaten rude
 Heir of an immortal nature
 Looking to the true Creator,
 Hope for good.

FEBRUARY XXV.

"When they were awake, they saw His glory."

LUKE, ix : 32.

HEAVY they were with sleep,
The chosen three, that day,
Who to the lonely mountain-steep
Went up with Christ, to pray.

But when their eyes unseal'd,
And the deep trance was o'er,
An overshadowing cloud reveal'd
Glory unseen before.

Lord!—loose the chains that bind,
In tyranny of night,
Our earth-bow'd, overladen minds
From faith's entrancing light,

And when pale Death shall break
This fleshly Nature's ties,
Bid us to thy full glory wake,
And in thine image rise.

FEBRUARY XXVI.

"What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

MICAH, vi: 8.

Do justly: 'tis thy God's command,
The mandate of thy King,
Be prompt in rendering dues to all,
And let no fraud-spot, great or small,
Unto thy conscience cling.

Love mercy: thou who need'st its aid
Through all this mortal strife,
Whose highest thought, whose purest deed
Must still divine forbearance need,
Love that which is thy life.

Walk humbly: thou so soon to sleep
Beneath the noteless sod,
For how can dust and ashes dare
The panoply of pride to wear!
Walk humbly with thy God.

FEBRUARY XXVII.

"Her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord;—it shall not be treasured, nor laid up."

ISAIAH, xxiii: 18.

HEARKEN, hearken,—man of care,
Toiling for thine unknown heir,
Gaining with a wearied breast,
Many wrinkles, little rest,

Hast thou sons?—instruction lend
How to make their God their friend,
Hast thou daughters?—teach the bliss
Of a better world than this.
Strive not thus to leave behind
Wealth that may their spirits blind.

Hearken, hoarder!—soon to part
From the gold that rules the heart,
Other feet must tread thy lands,
Keys be turn'd by stranger hands,
Why shouldst thou thy soul deny
Thanks that light the tearful eye?
Ere stern Death his debt shall take,
Rectify thy long mistake,
Strew thy treasures where they yield
Rich reward in heavenly field.

Hearken, Christian, who would still
Fain obey thy Master's will,
If thy merchandise and hire
Kindle Penury's winter fire,
Break the bread to hunger's child,
Pour a light o'er pagan wild,
If until thine eye grow dim,
They be holiness to Him,
And His love inspire thy breast,
All thou hast on earth, is blest.

FEBRUARY XXVIII.

“Forget not the sorrows of thy Mother.”

ECCLESIASTICUS, vii: 27.

Know'st thou what those sorrows were,
Borne in secret, day and night,
Taxing every burdened nerve,
Ere thine eyes beheld the light?

Know'st thou what unuttered dread,
Anguish even unto death,
Pangs of agony untold,
Won to earth thy first-born breath?

Know'st thou how her heart went forth,
Watching o'er thy cradle-bed,
When a thousand infant ills
Drew in ambush round thy head?

Know'st thou what a weight of woe
All her inmost spirit bow'd
When for thee her wailing prayer
Pierc'd dense midnight's darkest cloud;

When for all thy faults she sought
Pardon from the God of love,
And a mansion for thy soul
Mid the realms of bliss above?

If thou know'st them not,—beware,
Lest indifference or disdain,
With unfilial word or deed,
Recompense her toil and pain;

Lest that God who marks thy path,
 Holds thee ever in His sight,
 Should with pain of righteous wrath
 Such ingratitude requite.

FEBRUARY XXIX.

“A fire on the hearth.”

JEREMIAH, xxxvi: 22.

“A FIRE on the hearth.”

In his palace of state,
 The son of Josiah, with majesty sate,
 And proudly the crown of Judea he bore,
 But a Monarch was there, an Usurper of yore,
 Grey Winter, with scepter of adamant made,
 And his tax on the king, as the peasant, he laid.

“A fire on the hearth.”

In this cold clime of ours,
 Where there's ice in the fountain and frost on the flowers,
 And a chill in the heart of the worldling, if woe,
 Or Penury invoke what his wealth might bestow,
 A warmth for the soul, in our prayers we should claim,
 And the breath of God's spirit to kindle the flame.

“A fire on the hearth.”

Let it burn till we die,
 A pure christian love should the fuel supply,
 Let its embers glow on, to enlighten their gloom
 Who mourn for our loss, when we sleep in the tomb,—
 When we sleep in the tomb and our spirits attain
 The realm where no Winter hath license to reign.

March.

MARCH I.

"For Lo!—the Winter is past."

SONG OF SOLOMON, ii: 11.

STRIKE the glad harp with joyous cheer,
The long-expected Spring is here!
And see!—cold snows descend no more,
The frost-king flies, his reign is o'er,
Bright streams, so long in chains congeal'd,
Rush singing down o'er vale and field,
While here and there, warm nooks about,
The first-born violets venture out,
The jay, his blue wing spreads elate,
The red-breast answereth to her mate,
While many a bird from climes more blest,
Returns to build its northern nest
And bid the forest arch prolong
The sweetness of their varied song.

Heart!—is there winter in thy strain?
Do lingering frosts thy warmth enchain?
Break silence!—breathe melodious lays!
Awake thine eloquence of praise
To Him who quickeneth Nature's breath
And warns thee from the sleep of death.

MARCH II.

"Those that seek me early, shall find me."

PROVERBS, viii: 17.

HAIL young disciple!—who with early feet
 From the broad pathway of the world hast fled,
 And listening to thy Lord with reverence meet,
 In due obedience bow'd thy gentle head,

How beautiful to heed that Heavenly Friend,
 In the first freshness of thy budding prime,
 Before the clouds grow dark, the rains descend,
 Or o'er thy bright locks steal the frosts of time:

So, from all tempters that infest the fold,
 May His protecting favor hold thee free,
 Safe from all ills, till life's brief hour be told,
 Sweet, trusting spirit, may He shelter thee,

Till to that radiant sky 'tis thine to soar
 Where storms shall blight the rose, and toss the bark no
 more.

MARCH III.

"The Spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces."

PROVERBS, xxx: 28.

SEE! with what untiring skill
 What an energy of will,
 All unaided, all forlorn,
 Housewife's hate, and beauty's scorn,
 How the Spider builds her bower
 High in halls of regal power.

Is the mansion of thy care
 Made by wealth and taste so fair,
 By Misfortune's fearful sway,
 Laid in dust? or reft away?
 Yield no thought to blank despair;
 Firm in faith, and strong in prayer,
 Rise!—the ruin to repair.

For the Spider, homeless made,
 Hunted from each loved retreat,
 Not dejected, not afraid,
 Toiling thro' the gloomiest shade,
 Gathereth vigor from defeat:
 Child of Reason!—deign to see
 What an insect teacheth thee.

MARCH IV.

“Every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.”

JOHN, xv: 2.

OH,—if I am a branch
 Of the blest Saviour's vine,
 And on His quickening love depend
 For life and fruit divine,

Let me not start nor shrink
 In wild, despairing grief,
 Though the sharp pruning-knife remove
 The too redundant leaf,

Or the unsightly shoot
 Unsparing shred away,
 Or lop the excrescent wood, that tends
 To weakness and decay :

The lacerating steel
 The unerring Hand doth wield,
 And to its ministry severe
 In tearful trust I yield.

MARCH V.

"Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." HEBREWS, iv. 1

PAUSE, thinking brain! pause, throbbing heart!
 Pause, overladen breast!
 Turn to the window of the Ark,
 That peaceful rides the surges dark,
 There is thy rest.

Behold, that casement openeth wide
 To hail the entering guest,
 A pierced Hand is stretching there,
 Soul!—fold thy wearied wing, and share
 The promised rest.

Long hast thou roamed the deluge wide,
 Unsheltered and unblest,—
 Hark! Hark! the Master calleth thee,
 Obey His gracious voice, and be
 Ever at rest.

MARCH VI.

"Look not behind thee; neither stay thou in all the plain."

GENESIS, xix: 17.

LOOK not behind! youv'e broke the chain
That bound to folly and despair;
Press onward to the glorious land,
Nor falter till you enter there.

Look not behind! unnumbered snares
Are for the loitering Christian spread,
False hopes, strong habits, wild desires,
And ruin's pitfalls dark and dread.

Look not behind! a blighting curse
Was hers who paus'd at Sodom's bound,
She, lingering, loved those haunts of sin,
And fearful retribution found.

Look not behind! 'tis Satan's lure
To tempt you to his realm again;
The guiding angel bids you haste,
And tarry not in all the plain.

Escape for life! the flames of wrath
Are reddening on the winged wind,
See Zoar's sacred refuge nigh,
Escape for life!—look not behind!

MARCH VII.

"He left all,—rose up,—and followed him."

LUKE, v : 28.

LEFT *all*,—the business of his life,
Long habit's wreathed chain,
The earnest gathering-in of gold,
The close pursuit of gain,
And love of money,—prone to sway,
And sweep all other loves away.

Rose up,—was there no early friend
To stay the new career?
The impulsive loyalty to mock?
Or at the madness sneer
Of following One, with servile tread,
Who had not where to lay His head?

Left all,—*rose up*,—*and followed Him!*
With an undoubting love,
The meek, the lowly, the divine,
Whose kingdom was above:
Thus may we do, O, Master dear,
When thine awakening call we hear.

MARCH VIII.

“Rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith.”

COLOSSIANS, ii: 7.

HEED no blast that bloweth,
 Though it rock the tree,
 Heed no stream that floweth,
 Torrent though it be,
 Fear no cloud that thunders
 O'er the concave din,
 Rest thee in His strength and merit,
 Who forsakes no trusting spirit,
 Rooted and built up in Him.

Heed no wind of doctrine,
 Toward the haven steer,
 Guided by the pole-star,
 Though the proudest veer,
 Make God's Book thy pilot,
 O'er the billowy brine,
 Let no varying chart deceive thee,
 Let no erring leader grieve thee,
 Stablish'd in the faith divine.

MARCH IX.

“I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning.”

PSALMS, lix: 16.

How sweet to meet the morning rays
 As first from Heaven they dart,
 Or in the quiet walk to hold
 Communion with the heart,

Inquire from whence its cherish'd hopes?
 From whence its anxious care?
 What stirs the fountain of its joys
 Or wakes its deepest prayer?

Remind it of the Bounteous Hand
 That still its life sustains,
 And bids the crimson tide of health
 Flow thro' the bounding veins,

And as the dews on pinions white
 From vale and thicket rise,
 Incite its powers o'er earth to soar,
 And seek their native skies,

And as the birds in raptured song
 Respond from spray to spray,
 Attune its own spontaneous harp,
 And praise the God of Day.

MARCH X.

'From whence come wars and fightings?'

JAMES, iv: 1.

"FIGHTINGS *and wars?*"

I would not dip for these
 My pencil in description's sanguine stream,
 And strive to catch their fearful lineaments,
 Even if I might. Their brazen-throated sound,
 Their shock discordant, and fierce revelry

I would not fashion to my household lyre,
 Even if I could. There are, who may behold
 God's image marr'd, and call it glorious strife,
 Or godlike victory. There are who love
 The trumpet's clangor, with the dire response
 Of shriek and groan. But unto me it seems
 There is no need of such appliances
 To shorten life's frail span, and that Death does
 His own dread work so faithfully, that man
 Need help him not.

Why, even in time of peace,
 The dance of pleasure and the flush of health,
 He smiteth victims oft enough to please
 The hater of his kind.

The longest lease
 That earth's brief tenant holds, his fourscore years,
 Even without wars and fightings, are but short
 To do the work of an Eternity.

MARCH XI.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth."

MATTHEW, vi: 19.

SAY, is it meet for man, Oh, Lord,
 Who dwells in tents of clay,
 To plant his trust amid the sands
 For waves to wash away?

Or twine his love round broken reeds,
 Or with the thankless thorn,
 Or cast it on the frozen waste
 Of falsehood and of scorn?

Or gather gold in secret heaps,
 Insatiate still for more,
 To prove the ruin of his heirs,
 Or swell a stranger's store?

No! Thou hast bade him, while on earth
 This fleeting life is lent,
 In whatsoever state he is,
 Therewith to be content,

Place trust and love supreme on Thee,
 To Thee confide His care,—
 And lay his treasure up above,
 And find a mansion there.

MARCH XII.

"There arose a tempestuous wind called Euroclydon."

ACTS, xxvii: 14.

THUNDERING 'mid created things
 Thou dost crush the forest-kings
 With the shadow of thy wings,
 Thou dost vex the seething main,
 Rend the noble ship in twain,
 Heeding not the cry of pain,—
 Euroclydon.

Thou hast reft me as a tree,
 Thou hast lash'd me like the sea,
 Thou hast had thy will of me,

Where the whelming breakers roar
 Bade me strew my bosom's store,
 All is gone,—what wouldst thou more?
 Euroclydon.

I am looking to the sky,
 Where no cloud may ever lie,
 Where no tempest passeth by;
 I am looking for a home,
 Where no flower shall shed its bloom,
 Where thou mayst not dare to come,
 Euroclydon.

MARCH XIII.

“Christ shall be magnified in my body,—whether it be by life or by death.”

PHILIPPIANS, i: 20.

THROUGH all our pilgrim wanderings,
 Through all our fleeting years
 We'll magnify the Saviour
 In sunshine or in tears;

The poverty, the sorrow
 He suffered for our sakes,
 The blessed intercession
 He for our pardon makes;

For all his boundless mercies
 His grace we'll magnify,
 His Name shall be our anchor
 Whether we live or die.

And when this brief connection
 With mortal life is o'er,
 And unreturning voyagers
 We leave its changeful shore,

When to these skies and mountains
 Our closing eyes grow dim,
 We'll magnify the Saviour
 And fearless go to Him.

MARCH XIV.

"He hath dispersed, He hath given to the poor: His righteousness endureth forever."

PSALMS, cxii: 9.

GIVE to the poor thy bread,
 Clothe the uncover'd form,
 Throw shelter o'er the homeless head,
 That shrinks before the storm:
 So shall the prayers that grateful rise
 Win daily blessings from the skies.

Build thee a mansion fair,
 Bid artists deck the walls,
 With competition's ceaseless care,
 Pour luxury through its halls:
 The stranger there shall banners wave,
 And feast, when thou art in thy grave.

Hoard riches for thine heirs,
 Swell high the expected tide,
 And see them disappoint thy cares
 By indolence and pride;
 Yea, die unwept,—while bent on pelf,
 Each grasps the shekels for himself.

Disperse thine alms abroad,
 Wide as the winds shall bring
 Unto thine ears the cry of want,
 Or plaint of suffering:
 So shall great gain accrue to thee,
 When Heaven's dread books shall opened be.

MARCH XV.

“Not as the world giveth, give I unto you.”

JOHN, xiv: 27.

THE world hath been our lover,
 And flattering words it spoke;
 But, mid its wreath of roses,
 It hid an iron yoke

The world hath been our master,
 And heavy toils it laid,
 Tasks without intermission,
 Unblessed, and unrepaid.

The world hath kept our treasure
 But, when we sought its hold,
 The rust was on our silver,
 And the robber had our gold.

So now our love and service,
 And holiest trust we give
 Unto that dear Redeemer,
 Who died that we might live.

MARCH XVI.

"I will fear no evil,—for Thou art with me."

PSALMS, xxiii: 4.

DOth sadness in thy soul abide?
 Resume the smile of cheer,
 And be Jehovah's will thine own:
 The light that shines around the throne
 Shall make his purpose clear.

Naught is an evil, though it lay
 Thy dearest idol low,
 Until, contending with the dart,
 Thy proud and unsubmitive heart
 Decides to make it so.

Count naught an evil while the breast
 From self-reproach is free,
 Count naught an evil, save the sin
 That, coiling dark thy soul within,
 Doth hide God's face from thee.

MARCH XVII.

"Be ye thankful."

COLOSSIANS, iii: 15.

O, BE ye thankful, while ye breathe
This wondrous vital air,
And pitch your tent upon the earth
That God hath made so fair,
And rest upon His glorious hope
A heavenly home to share.

O, be ye thankful for the love
Like dew around you shed,
That when you slumber, sets a watch
Of angels round the bed,
And when you wake, with constant care
Doth in your pathway tread.

Lord, make us thankful, for too oft,
By fleeting sorrows bowed,
In the dark pall of discontent
Our ingrate souls we shroud:
Lend us thy sunbeam, till we reach
The sky without a cloud.

MARCH XVIII.

“Light that shineth in a dark place.”

2ND PETER, i: 19.

THE night drew on, thro' paths unknown
The weary traveler toil'd alone,
Now climb'd the rocky steep with pain,
Now plunging crossed the marshy plain,
Or grop'd thro' trackless forests dread,
Where brambles spring and pitfalls spread;
At length, thro' clouds that barr'd his way,
Look'd forth the Moon, with silver ray,
And loud he sang, in grateful love,
“What's dark below, is light above.”

The Grave, that never yet hath said
“Enough,” was with my heart's blood fed,
And as I turned with bitter throe
From its insatiate brink to go,
I marvel'd why a Hand Divine
Should smite that last, lone hope of mine:
Yet once, as holy twilight wove
Its shadowy vail o'er field and grove,
I heard a voice,—the voice of Love,—
“What's dark below, is light above.”

MARCH XIX.

"The Name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe."

PROVERBS, xviii: 10.

Who knoweth of his safety, Lord,
Who, in this house of clay,
Doth bide the buffet of the storm,
The footstep of decay?

Whose life by fleeting air is fed,
Whose thread-like nerves do thrill
At every sympathy with pain,
At every thought of ill?

Who knoweth of his safety, Lord,
Who o'er the crumbling verge
Of fearful floods, with blinded eye,
His slippery course doth urge?

Who, while he dreams to pluck the flowers,
May on a serpent tread,
And, in the glory of his prime,
Be numbered with the dead?

He knoweth, Lord! whose soul doth rest
On Thine eternal might,
The anchor of whose hope is sure,
Though earth eludes his sight,

Who, when the hoarded joys of time
All like a vision fly,
Can from this falling tent of flesh
Pass to an home on high.

MARCH XX.

"Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee;—the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."

PSALMS, lxxvi: 10.

GOD of the chainless winds, that wildly wreck
 The moaning forest, and the ancient oak
 Rend like a sapling spray, or sweep the sand
 O'er the lost caravan, that trod, with pride
 Of tinkling bells, and camel's arching necks,
 The burning desert,—a dense host at morn;
 At eve, a bubble on the trackless waste,
 God of the winds! canst thou not rule the heart,
 And gather back its passions, when thou wilt,
 Bidding them, "*peace, be still?*"

God of the waves,
 That toss and mock the mightiest argosy,
 As the gay zephyr frets the thistle-down,
 Until the sternest leader's heart doth melt
 Because of trouble, thou who call'st them back
 From their rough challenge to the muffled sky,
 And bidd'st them harmless kiss an infant's feet,
 That gathereth silver shells, canst thou not curb
 The tumult of the nations, the hot wrath
 Of warring kings, who like the babe must die,
 Vaunting this day in armor, and the next,
 Unshrouded, slumbering on the battle-field?

MARCH XXI.

"Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters."

ISAIAH, xxxii: 20.

Sow, early by the waters,
Before advancing day
Comes in its arrogance of power
To bear your hopes away,
Before the quickly-rooted weeds,
That ask no culture's toil,
Spring up, and with their mushroom growth
Usurp the yielding soil.

Sow, with a tireless labor,
Because the world is strong
To set in dark array the plants
Of violence and wrong,
Thorns hath it too, and brambles,
And tares that mock the trust,
And Sodom's apples only fill'd
With bitterness and dust.

Seed sowers! ye are blessed,
A glorious right ye hold,
A kingly power the immortal soul
Like plastic wax to mold,
Come forth, before the sparkle
Of the first dews are dry,
And train for Heaven's angelic bowers,
That which can never die.

MARCH XXII.

"Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

MATTHEW, vi: 34.

EACH moment hath its task,
Each hour, its lot of care,
Nor heavier burden will He lay,
Who sends them forth and guides their way,
Than their slight wing can bear.

Then why should skeptic man
Obstruct their buoyant flight?
Forestall misfortune's raven tone,
And with a burden not their own
Oppress their new-born might?

Incite no cloud to throw
Its shadow o'er thy walls,
Nor waste thine energies in air,
Nor hold dark dalliance with despair,
When Heaven to gladness calls.

Why should forebodings vex
The current of thy days?
And visioned ills the future wrong?
And discords mar thy spirit-song,
When God demandeth praise?

In every time of woe
He knows we are but dust,
He well remembereth all our frame,
Our secret pangs His pity claim,
Then *trust*, my brother, *trust*.

MARCH XXIII.

"What is truth?"

JOHN, xviii : 38.

"WHAT *is truth?*"—inquired the Roman,
 But he glided swift away,
 Lest, perchance, the heavenly answer
 Might rebuke him with its ray.

Like a lamb before the shearers
 Mute amid that fearful strife,
 Patient stood the meek Redeemer
 He who was the truth and life.

Falsehood held its way and triumph'd,
 Hatred roll'd its flashing eye,
 Vacillating Pilate yielded
 To the clamor,—"*Crucify!*"

Deign to teach us, dearest Saviour,
 Doubting mid our daily task,
 Doubting where our duty guides us,
 Be not silent when we ask,

Duped by shadows and illusions,
 Groping on through age and youth,
 Thou who art our light and leader
 Deign to tell us *what is truth.*

MARCH XXIV.

"Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me."

JOHN, vii: 34.

YET a little while, my friends,
And beside the quiet fountain,
Where the cherish'd willow bends,
Where the thicket shades the mountain,
Where the vernal violets start,
Where the summer-vine is breathing,
By the fireside of the heart,
While the wintry snows are wreathing,
By the sea's resounding shore
Where your love so oft would bind me,
Listing to the billow's roar,
Ye may seek, but shall not find me.

Yet a little while, my foes,
And your lynx-like care is over,
Haughty eyes that scann'd my woes,
Watch'd my wanderings to discover,
Ears, that to my words gave heed
Still, their simple purport veiling,
Lips that darkened every deed,
Magnified each fault and failing,
Siren smile and falsehood's kiss
Shall no longer grieve or blind me,
One lone victim ye will miss,—
Ye shall seek, but shall not find me.

MARCH XXV.

"Let them alone."

MATTHEW, xv: 14.

WHAT was thy sentence, dearest Lord?
 What was thy stern, denouncing word
 On mocking scribe and pharisee,
 Whose rootless goodness troubled thee?
 Methinks I hear that solemn tone
 As of some far-off billow's moan,
"Let them alone."

And could the doom of scourge, or scar,
 Famine, or pestilence, or war,
 Or any other dreaded thing
 From which the ransom'd soul may spring
 Unhurt above, be half so dread,
 As those few words the Saviour said?
"Let them alone."

Oh! try us in Thy furnace-fires,
 And purify our base desires,
 Strike down,—strike deep,—enshroud in woe
 Whate're we call our own, below,
 If thou but wield the Chastener's rod,
 But say not unto us, Oh God!
"Let them alone."

MARCH XXVI.

"Underneath are the Everlasting Arms."

DEUTERONOMY, xxxiii : 27.

LIKE shadows fitting o'er the wall,
Our helpless race appear,
Birth, growth, and death await them all,
The sigh, the smile, the tear.

Disease and Pain keep watch to slay,
For so it was of yore,
The loved and trusted may betray
As they have done before.

Still, on we press, o'er vale and steep,
'Neath sunbeam, storm, or blast,
The cradle gives our earliest sleep,
The coffin-shroud our last.

Yet though the wildest tempests moan,
If, 'mid their wrath severe,
A Father's Arm is round us thrown,
Say, what have we to fear?

Why boast ye of your riches proud,
Or of your honors bright?
See, swifter than the changeful cloud,
They fade and take their flight.

Why droop ye thus, when joys decay?
When props are overthrown?
What have ye, in this house of clay,
That ye may call your own?

What boots it, though ye weeping bend
Along your pilgrim-way,
If toward that cloudless home ye tend
Where tears are wiped away?

Then shrink not thus from ills and pains,
For though the world be drear,
The Everlasting Arm sustains,
And what have ye to fear?

MARCH XXVII.

"In God is my salvation and my glory, the rock of my strength and my refuge is in God."

PSALMS, lxi: 7.

WHO giveth salvation, when warfare is o'er?
When the breath goeth forth and returneth no more?
And where is the glory, when death and decay
Have swept in stern triumph their victim away?

What rock hath the pilgrim, when noontide is high,
And the sands of the desert are scorching and dry?
What refuge, when night all untented draws near,
And the roar of the lion sounds deep on his ear?

Then the voice of the trustful replied from the sod,
"The Rock of my strength and my refuge is God."

MARCH XXVIII.

"See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath."

Exodus, xvi: 29.

THE world is full of toil,
It bids the traveler roam,
It binds the laborer to the soil,
The student to his home,
The beasts of burden sigh,
O'erladen and opprest,
The Sabbath lifts its banner high,
And gives the weary rest.

The world is full of care,
The haggard brow is wrought
In furrows as of fix'd despair,
And check'd the heavenward thought;
But with indignant grace
The Sabbath's chastening tone,
Drives money-changers from the place
Which God doth call his own.

The world is full of grief,
Sorrows o'er sorrows roll,
And the fair hope that brings relief
Doth sometimes pierce the soul.
The Sabbath's peaceful bound
Bears Mercy's holy seal,
A balm of Gilead for the wound
That man is weak to heal.

The world is full of sin,
 A dangerous flood it rolls,
 The unwary to its breast to win,
 And whelm unstable souls;
 The Sabbath's beacon tells
 Of reefs and wrecks below,
 And warns, tho' gay the billow swells,
 Beneath are death and woe.

There is a world, where none
 With fruitless labor sigh,
 Where care awakes no lingering groan,
 And grief no agony,
 Where sin with fatal arts
 Hath never forg'd her chains,
 But deep-enthron'd in angel hearts,
 One endless Sabbath reigns

MARCH XXIX.

"Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him."

JEREMIAH, xxii: 10.

Is it not strange, that we who have such cause
 For tears within ourselves, our wants, our sins,
 Our faithlessness in duty, have such call
 For frequent tears of sympathy with pain,
 And woe of others, yet a space so brief,
 That we leave much undone, and go our way,
 Ne'er to return; is it not passing strange,
 That we should drain the fountains of our grief,
 And take such portions of our fleeting span
 To weep for those in glory, from whose eyes
 All tears are wip'd forever?

What if once
 We were so happy as to clasp their hands,
 And hear their household voice, and call them friends,
 Kindred, or lovers?—Shall we mourn for this,
 Our glory, our felicity, our joy?
 And what if He who saw them ripened first,
 Took them before us? Shall we grieve for that?
 No. Rather with a clear and sunny eye
 Let us walk on to meet them, full of hope,
 The joy of God our strength.

MARCH XXX.

“That the Lord thy God may show us the way wherein we may walk, and the thing that we may do.”

JEREMIAH, xlii: 3.

TEMPTATIONS throng our course,
 And thousands go astray;
 Smooth are the roads that lead to death,
 How shall we choose our way?

Sloth may enchain the hand,
 Clouds settle o'er the brain,
 Nor have we always light to make
 Our Christian duty plain.

Lord, every secret thought
 Is open to thy view,
 Show us the path wherein to walk,
 The thing that we must do.

MARCH XXXI.

"We have the mind of Christ."

1ST CORINTHIANS, ii: 16.

"THE *mind of Christ*," the lowly thought,
The care, the lost to save,
The love for childhood's trusting smile,
The zeal for truth, the scorn of guile,
The tear at friendship's grave,

Pity and pardon for the frail,
For pain, the healing care,
The silent lip to wrath and spite,
"*Væ vobis*" for the hypocrite,
For enmity, the prayer.

O pilgrim! look upon thy life,
Where'er its course may glide,
And see if His example sway,
Thine inward soul, thine outward way,
A pattern and a guide;

And see if through its daily change,
If woe or sickness pined,
Or burdening toils the hours employ,
Or swells the exulting tide of joy
There dwells the *Christlike mind*.

April.

APRIL I.

"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

PSALMS, xxx: 6.

SPRING goeth forth and weepeth, in the path
Left desolate by Winter:—doth she fear
Some ebullition of his tyrant wrath
That from her downcast eyelids drops the tear?

Oh Queen of unborn flowers! shrink not to take
Thy rightful scepter o'er a subject clime,
Why should a lot of royalty awake
The wrinkle and the thorn before their time?

Be firm and hopeful! for the winged smile
Shall kiss the crystal dew-drop from thy cheek,
And in thy foot-prints, spring with gentlest wile,
The loyal primrose, and the violet meek,

And countless plants shall don their mantles green;
And balmy skies, with mild, propitious ray,
Shall bid their winged heralds bless the queen,
Who joins a tender heart to regal sway:

So, go thou forth with tears!—thy precious seed
Sowing in lowly trust, for Joy shall crown the deed.

APRIL II.

"The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God."

PSALMS, xiv: 1.

"No *God! No God,*"—the simplest flower
That on the wild is found,
Shrinks as it drinks its cup of dew,
And trembles at the sound,
"No God!" astonished Echo cries
From out her cavern hoar,
And every wandering bird that flies,
Reproves the Atheist lore.

The solemn forest lifts its head,
The Almighty to proclaim,
The brooklet on its crystal urn
Doth leap to grave his name
How swells the deep and vengeful sea
Along his billowy track,
And red Vesuvius opes his mouth
To hurl the falsehood back.

The palm-tree, with its princely crest,
The cocoa's leafy shade,
The bread-fruit bending to its lord,
In yon far-island glade,
The winged seeds that, borne by winds,
The roving sparrows feed,
The melon on the desert sands,
Confute the scorner's creed.

"No God!"—with indignation high
 The fervent sun is stirred,
 And the pale moon turns paler still
 At such an impious word,
 While from their burning thrones the stars
 Look down with angry eye,
 That thus a worm of dust should mock
 Eternal majesty.

APRIL III.

"Lo! children are an heritage of the Lord."

PSALMS, cxxvii: 3.

WHAT bringeth a joy o'er thy pallid mien,
 More deep than the prime of thy youth had seen?
 What kindleth a beam in thy thoughtful eye
 Like the vestal flame from a purer sky?
 Sweet were her tones, as the wind-harp free,
 • "*The smile of the babe that is born to me.*"

What maketh thy home with its noiseless shade
 More dear than the haunts where thy beauty strayed?
 Than the dance where thy form was the zephyr's wing?
 Than the crowded hall, or the charmed ring?
 Than the flatterer's wile, with its syren strain?
 "*The voice of the babe that with care I train.*"

What lendeth the landscape a brighter hue?
 A clearer spark to the diamond dew?

What giveth the song of the bird its zest,
 As straw by straw it doth build its nest?
 What sweeteneth the flowers on their budding stalks?
 “*The kiss of the child by my side that walks.*”

What quickeneth thy prayer when it seeks the Throne
 With a fervor it never before had known?
 What girdeth thy life in its daily scope
 For the labor of love, and the patience of hope?
 The freedom from self, and the high intent?
 “*The soul of the child that my God hath lent.*”

APRIL IV.

“We shall see Him as He is.”*

1ST JOHN, iii : 2.

“SHALL see *Him as He is!*” Whom shalt thou see?
 That blessed Friend, who for our sakes did bear
 Scourge, persecution, and the blood-stain'd cross,
 That we the mansions of the just might share?

“*Shall see Him as He is!*” What shalt thou see?
 Hands stretch'd to raise thee to a pardoning breast,
 And lips o'erflowing with the music-strain,—
 “Come, good and faithful! enter to thy rest?”

Say, will this win thee from thy cherish'd joys?
 The loving partner of thy youthful days?
 The pleasant home? the first-born boy, who woke
 A warmth that lingered in thy deathful gaze?

* The last words of a young mother, whispered with a radiant smile.

The fair, fair girl? the merry, dove-eyed babe,
That in its nurse's arms unconscious leaps,
Nor dreams what treasure rifled from its arms,
Beneath the church-yard's sacred shadow sleeps?

Speak, angel,—answer! But, alas, how vain
To put such questions to the blest above,
Who, safe from ills of earth, no tear, no stain,
Are wrapp'd in Heaven's refugent robe of love.

Thou, who *hast* seen Him as He is,—inspire
Our wandering feet in wisdom's paths to go,
And with one echo from thy golden lyre,
Lure the sad mourners from their depths of woe.

APRIL V.

"Toiling in rowing."

MARK, vi: 48.

TOILING in rowing! Wind and tide
Our wearied bark oppose,
As oft, with seams that open wide,
Upon her course she goes,
And we have taken nothing yet,
Though still the watch we keep,
Nor fail to cast our empty net
Into the faithless deep.

Toiling in rowing! Dearest Lord
We faint amid the strife,
But thou canst vanquish with a word
The stormy surge of life,

And when Thou meet'st us on the sea
With hand outstretched to aid,
Oh! grant us strength to cling to Thee,
And not to be afraid.

APRIL VI.

“ And Aaron held his peace.”

LEVITICUS, x: 3.

Two impious censers flaming high
Gleam'd out on Israel's startled eye,
While vengeful skies, with lightning red,
Cleft o'er the rash offenders' head;
Then lo, with scorched and livid mien,
Two corpses, wreathed in smoke were seen,
And bending low, with anguish torn,
The high-priest mourned his dead first-born.
But when retired from every eye,
He gave the reins to memory,
Ah! who might tell a father's pain,
O'er rebel sons untimely slain!
Yes, they whose infant forms he reared,
For whom he watched and prayed and feared,
Whose glance in manhood's beauty proud
So lately awed the admiring crowd,
Now, filled with arrogance and pride
Jehovah's mandate had defied,

And in that act of sin, became
 A mass of ashes,—mixed with flame.
 Yet, unrepining at the stroke,
 He bade each murmur cease,
 Even while stern grief his spirit broke,
 Silent he bore Jehovah's yoke,
 And meekly held his peace.

APRIL VII.

"Is any merry?—Let him sing Psalms."

JAMES, v: 13.

SING at your work,—'t will lighten
 The labors of the day,
 Sing at your work,—'t will brighten
 The darkness of the way.

Sing at your work,—though sorrow
 Its lengthen'd shade may cast,
 Joy cometh on the morrow,—
 A sunbeam cheers the blast.

To pain a brief dominion
 Is o'er the spirit given,—
 But music nerves the pinion
 That bears it up to heaven.

APRIL VIII.

"Unto them that look for Him, shall He appear the second time,—without sin, unto salvation."

HEBREWS, ix: 28.

NIGHT forsakes her ebon seat,
Gathered mists in volumes fleet,
Dawn upon the mountains grey
Trembles with prelusive ray,
Till the lifted gate of morn
Purples where the day is born,
And that glorious orb doth rise,
Eye of earth, and sea, and skies.

Thus, 'mid shades of ancient time,
Patriarchs gazed with faith sublime,
Seers invoked the promised light,
Prophets sought its vision bright,
Till on Bethlehem's blessed glade
Burst the beam that ne'er shall fade,
And the raptured matin song
Swelled from Heaven's resplendent throng.

Saviour, come! Our spirits wait,
Enter, with Thy regal state,
If our darkening sins prevail,
If our dawn of hope be pale,
Wake that star, whose aspect sweet
Led the sages to Thy feet,
Wake that sun, whose holy ray
Brightens to Eternal Day.

APRIL IX.

"Father forgive them: for they know not what they do."

LUKE, xxiii: 34.

"THEY know not what they do,"—who stray
In paths of guilt and woe,
And heedless shun the narrow way
Where Christ commands to go,
Who to the vanities of time,
Which like the shadows fly,
Debase the energies sublime,
Of that which can not die.

"They know not what they do,"—who spurn
The Holy Spirit's breath,
Which warns them in its love, to turn
From everlasting death,
Who from their guardian angel's care
With heedless haste have fled,
Unarm'd with penitence and prayer
Against the day of dread.

"*Father, forgive.*" Our countless sins
Stand forth in dark array,
Yet for thy boundless mercy's sake
Turn not thy face away,
But by our dear Redeemer's prayer,
Breath'd forth in mortal pain,
Grant, while our lips its language bear,
Our souls its grace may gain.

APRIL X.

‘In the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up.’

PSALMS, v: 3.

BEFORE the portal of the east
 In golden glory breaks,
 Before the voice of slumbering man
 Its varied echo makes,

Before the lily of the field
 Unseals its cradled eye,
 Before the pinions of the lark
 Unfold in melody,

My heart awaking turns to Thee,
 In whom is all her trust,
 Who breathed this mystic power of thought
 Into a frame of dust.

Oh, at this sweetly sacred hour,
 From all intrusions free,
 Smile, Lord, upon the waiting soul,
 And draw her near to thee.

APRIL XI.

“For none of us liveth to himself.”

ROMANS, xiv: 7.

“Not to myself,” said the daisy,
 With its petals bright and frail,
 “Not to myself,” said the violet,
 Breathing perfume on the gale,

“Not to myself,” said the robin,
As it flew from tree to tree,
Making each listener happy
With its gushing melody,

“Not to myself,” said the streamlet,
While the ozier on its banks
And the creeping fringe of grass-blades
Breathed out their earnest thanks,

“Not to myself,” said the thunder
Of the deep and surging sea,
With the bark upon its bosom,
And the kingly argosy,

Making highway for the nations,
From the tropic to the pole,
And knitting climes together,
And binding soul to soul.

Man! hast thou learned the lesson
Creation strives to teach,
Thus with her pointing finger,
Thus with her varied speech?

Is there not many a blessing,
With heaven-prevailing tone,
That leaves strong echo in the heart,
“Not for thyself alone?”

APRIL XII.

"Are they not all ministering spirits?"

HEBREWS, i: 14.

WINGED Creatures! are ye nigh
To our dim mortality?
Mark ye, if we smile or weep?
Glide ye round our pillowed sleep?
Wherefore doth our earnest eye
Fail your hovering forms to spy?
Wherefore doth our listening ear
Fail your whisper'd word to hear?

When with sympathetic zeal
Others joys and woes we feel,
When with self-forgetful care
We their burdens bend to bear,
Shield the lonely orphan's head,
Give him sheltering home and bread,
Do ye not our course approve?
Share we not your work of love?

If of heavenly things we speak
With warm heart and glowing cheek,
Dark and untamed spirits teach,
Luxury of hallow'd speech,
Frail and fallen brethren aiding,
Not condemning, not upbraiding,
Learn we not some note to raise
Of your symphony of praise?

Ye upon my Lord did wait,
Wondering at His low estate,
When with sorrow like despair
All our sin and shame He bare,
When His friends in slumber deep,
Fail'd their one hour's watch to keep,
Ye beheld Him kneel and pray,
Ye the blood drops kiss'd away.

Oh! when we, to error prone
Dash our foot against a stone,
Halt upon our rock-strewn way,
Feel this earthly house decay,
Pause beside that valley dread
Which no foot with ours may tread,
Near us, in our anguish be,
Strengthen our Gethsemane.

APRIL XIII.

“Lord, Remember me.”

LUKE, xxiii: 42.

I AM not worthy that the Power
Who touched stern Sinai's brow with flame,
Who rules wild Ocean's stormiest hour,
And calls each star, from nightly bower,
Forth by its name,—
I am not worthy He should deign
A thought on one so frail and vain,
A broken leaf that rides the blast,
A weed upon the waters cast,
Yet venture still to bend the knee,
And pray, “O Lord, remember me!”

For in this life of snares and woes,
 Where oft, with unregarded sigh,
 Meek Virtue like an exile goes,
 And when the latest tear oe'rflows
 The closing eye,
 When summon'd from this earthly show
 Alone, to worlds unseen we go,
 Where shall we turn? on whom depend
 For solace, O Almighty Friend,
 Unless in faith we cry to thee,
 "Remember, Lord! Remember me."

APRIL XIV.

"Observe the month of Abib."

DEUTERONOMY, xvi: 1.

OH, Paschal-feast! which all the tribes
 Of ancient Israel kept,
 In memory of that fearful time
 When tyrant Egypt wept,
 And the destroying Angel's eye
 In glorious goodness pass'd them by.

Methinks I see each household train
 In solemn reverence stand,
 With girded loins, and sandal'd feet,
 And pilgrim-staff in hand,
 As those constrain'd afar to tread
 And break in haste the unleaven'd bread.

How oft amid our festive scenes
 The ghost of Memory steals,
 And o'er their most exulting hours
 A saddening tint reveals,
 And bitter herbs infusion throw,
 In all our sparkling cups below.

We keep our passovers on earth
 Like travelers duly bound
 Each passing moment as it flies
 To hear the warning sound,
 An unseen country to explore
 And journey to return no more.

APRIL XV.

"The Lord bath His way in the whirlwind, and in the storm"

NAHUM, i: 3.

WINDS vex'd the billows, till in whelming wrath
 They smote the shore, and with the ancient rocks
 Chode in their bitterness. Wild tumult spread,
 And the white-crested waves each other met.
 As though from sudden force of rage or grief,
 The Deep grew hoary.

Far, the sheeted spray
 Drove landward, drenching the astonish'd vales,
 Where it ne'er swept before, and the torn trees
 Writhing amid dissever'd branches, shed
 Their leafy honors, with salt, dripping tears,
 Like Rachel weeping o'er her children lost.

—Then with her holy eye, the Moon look'd down
 Like tutelary spirit, prone to soothe
 The elements of discord. All in vain!
 For on they strove, tenacious of their space
 Of brief misrule. So, with a mournful brow
 She hid behind the veil of Heaven again,
 While in each chasm and subterranean cell,
 The pent sea thunder'd, with a vengeful voice,
 Troubling the listeners.

God be with the bark
 That at the mercy of this pitiless storm
 Confronts the mountain-surge.

God give his strength
 To the poor mariner, and to the hearts
 That sleepless agonize for friends who dare
 The seething Ocean, in a night like this.

APRIL XVI.

“Our Father! who art in Heaven.”

LUKE, xi: 2.

FATHER! we have seen Thee walking
 At the hush of dawning day,
 As amid the quiet garden
 Wrapp'd in Eden flowers we lay,
 All the hopes of earth to cheer us,
 Sang like spring-birds, sweet and clear,
 But Thy glorious footstep near us,
 Swelled the joy to rapture's tear.

Father! we have heard Thy whisper
Mid our spirit's inmost tent,
And its curtains all were shaken
At the wondrous thrill it sent,
For the desert-sands were dreary,
And the stars withheld their flame,
And our pilgrim feet were weary
Till that blest protection came.

Father! since Thy voice doth guide us,
Since Thy presence still is nigh,
Let us, whatso'er betide us,
Onward press, with heavenward eye;
What avails it, though our evening
Darken like the storm-tossed sea,
If our soul, 'mid all its changes
Turn with filial trust to Thee.

APRIL XVII.

"Beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying fowl."

PSALMS, cxlviii: 10.

REGARD the patient ox,
Regard the laboring steed,
The trusty dog, the peaceful flocks
That in thy pastures feed;
Their simple wants supply,
Protection kind bestow,
And turn away the tyranny,
That seeks to work their woe.

For in those humble hearts
Do mute affections flame,
And faithful virtues that might put
More selfish man to shame.

Yea, even yon abject race,
The creeping things of earth,
Since God hath made them by His power,
Scorn not their reptile birth,

Draw back the crushing foot
That threatens their span of gloom,
Nor lightly quench the spark of life
Thou never canst relume.

That mystic spark of life!
Respect its lowliest form,
Thou who in the Creator's sight
Art but thyself a worm.

APRIL XVIII.

"They promised to give him money."

MARK, xiv: 11

THEY promised money, and he mus'd
Upon the tempter's tone,
Until the sin at first abhorr'd,
Had all familiar grown,

They promised money, and he gazed
Upon the glittering bait,
And cast his shuddering conscience in,
To make an even weight,

They promised money, so he broke
The last most sacred tie,
And sold the Master whom he served,
In cruel pangs to die.

Oh! thou betrayer with a kiss,
What will thy money buy,
When thou a caitiff' corse shalt hang
Between the earth and sky?

Will money bribe the Righteous Judge?
Will money pay thy cost?
Strong Satan's prison-gates unbar?
Or save a soul that's lost?

APRIL XIX.

"Now abideth Faith, Hope, Charity, these three, but the greatest of these is Charity."

1ST CORINTHIANS, xiii: 13.

WHEN along our pilgrim-way
Fears deter, or doubts betray,
When by darken'd vale and stream
Wild illusive meteors gleam,

And the maze where thousands go,
 Tempts to mirth, but ends in woe,
 Faith!—uphold us, lest we stray,
 Guide us in our Saviour's way.

If the gardens we have drest,
 Storms despoil, or weeds infest,
 If the idols of our trust,
 Fade and fall and turn to dust,
 If the lips that charm'd our ear
 Molder in their grave-cloth drear,
 Hope!—console us when we sigh,
 With thine ever-upward eye.

When, with failing flesh and heart,
 For a world unknown we part,
 Struggling 'mid the fatal strife,
 At the broken gate of life,
 Charity!—Thou greatest!—speed
 To our souls in utmost need,
 Charity!—Almighty Love!
 Bear us in thine arms above.

APRIL XX.

“The Lord looketh on the heart.”

1ST SAMUEL, xvi: 7.

WHEN in thy temple, Lord of hosts,
 With prayerful lip we bow,
 If every vain and wayward thought
 Were written on our brow,

And if the searching eye of man
Might each emotion see,
And every motive all unveiled,
As clearly read by Thee,

How would the most familiar friend
From his companion start,
And neighbor scan the neighbor's face
With terror in his heart.

Yea, many whom a flattering world
Applauds as just and true,
Might to the rocks and mountains turn
To shield them from its view.

But Thou to whose omniscient Eye
Our every thought on earth
Hath stood uncurtained and revealed,
E'en from our day of birth,

How great must thy forbearance be!
How measureless and vast
The power of that atoning love
Which pardoneth us at last!

APRIL XXI.

"Which all are to perish with the using."

COLOSSIANS, ii: 22.

THE sparkling eye that rul'd the heart
Hath lost its magic beam,
And in the socket, heavily,
Like waning lamp doth gleam.

The wearied ear remits its toil,
Rejects the music strain,
And with the folly of the world,
No longer loads the brain.

The hand, that with untiring deeds,
Did mark the days of old,
Now trembleth in its feeble grasp
The water-cup to hold.

The foot, no more o'er hill and dale
Doth keep its vigorous way,
But on the cushioned sofa rests,
A prisoner, day by day.

Even Memory, with a wrinkled brow,
Is faltering o'er the page
On which she registered her gains
From infancy to age.

And Fancy faileth in her skill
O'er fairy-land to soar,
And sadly folds a broken wing,
To ride the blast no more.

But the sweet spirit's love to man,
In God its fearless trust,
Its zeal to keep a Saviour's law,
These fade not into dust,

These perish not with use, but grow,
Like beaten gold, more bright,—
The deathless children of the skies
That heavenward take their flight.

APRIL XXII.

“For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.”

JOB, xiv: 7.

YE come in beauty forth, green Trees!
Ye boast a second bloom,
Though at your feet, by deathful dart
The rose and lily of the heart
Were smitten to the tomb.

I saw ye, when ye bared your boughs
Before the wintry storm,
But now ye flaunt in vestments gay,
While many a mourner weeps this day
The lost and lovely form.

Then the trees answer'd, as the breeze
Their harp-strings woke to sound,
“Kind Nature's ministers are we,
With fragrant balm of sympathy
To heal affliction's wound:

Yea, more than this. To Faith we say
Thus shall the dead arise,
And those who sleep in Jesus, burst
With joy their prison of the dust
For glory in the skies.’

APRIL XXIII.

“Lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.”

ACTS, xxvii: 24.

FATHER! who o'er Time's boisterous tide,
 A precious bark art steering,
 Mother! who anxious at his side,
 Each distant storm art hearing,
 Bind ye the promise to your breast,
 Thus by the angel spoken?
 Believe ye that your circle blest
 Shall gain the port unbroken?

Wide sever'd o'er their voyage course,
 Some idol child ye cherish,
 'Mid stranger-seas and billows hoarse,
 Far from your side may perish,
 Still trust ye o'er these waves of care
 To meet in God's communion,
 And be your life one sleepless prayer
 To gain that glorious union.

When stranded on the latest rock,
 Life's flickering watch-light burneth,
 And lonely toward that bourne ye go,
 From whence no guest returneth,
 Then may each bark your love hath launch'd,
 Gliding with sail unriven,
 Send forth a seraph soul, to form
 A “family in heaven.”

APRIL XXIV.

"It is finished."

JOHN, xix: 30.

THE harp of prophecy was hush'd,
Strange tones its music drown,
For angel-choirs to Bethlehem's vales
With songs of peace came down,
And Christ to Calvary went forth,
Wearing his thorny crown.

Asunder clave the rifted rocks,
The quaking earth did wail,
Thick darkness came at noon-day up,
The shrinking sun to veil,
And from the moldering charnel-house,
Stalked forth the tenants pale.

"*'Tis finished!*" cried the Son of God,
And yielded up the ghost,
"*'Tis finished!*" echoed far and wide
The bright, celestial coast,
And man, the sinner, shouted high
Amid the ransom'd host.

APRIL XXV.

"Looking unto Jesus."

HEBREWS, xii: 2.

LONELY hearted!—sunk in sorrow,
 Whom no words of pity cheer,
 Unto whom each opening morrow,
 Still is desolate and drear,

Hath the tomb thine idols hidden?
 Did the trusted leave thy side?
 Were thy fond affections chidden
 Till each clasping tendril died?

Did thy chosen props deceive thee?
 Was thy strong reliance spurn'd?
 Or did stern indifference grieve thee
 When thy soul for balm-drops yearn'd?

Look to Jesus, lonely hearted,
 He thy secret sigh hath heard,
 He, the scorn'd,—denied,—deserted,
 By the indebted and endear'd.

What, though all the world forsake thee,
 If His favor on thee shine,
 He to his embrace will take thee,
 With a sympathy divine;

So shall all earth's tribulation,
 All its solitude of pain,
 Minister to thy salvation,
 Work thine everlasting gain.

APRIL XXVI.

"Save me from the Lion's mouth."

PSALMS, xxii: 21.

SHALL the form the Almighty molded,
For the creature of His care,
Shall the spirit He enfolded
In such casket, frail and rare,

Stain the beauty He imparted
Through an appetite of shame?
Leave affection broken-hearted,
Mourning o'er a tarnished name?

Oh! forbid it, Thou who givest
Armor to the tempted soul,
Thou, who in Thy glory livest
While eternal ages roll;

Through this brief and dark probation,
Keep us from such evil free,
Be our Refuge and Salvation,
Till we find a home with Thee.

APRIL XXVII.

"I am an husbandman."

ZACHARIAH, xiii: 5.

'Tis better Earth's fair gifts to take,
Of fruits, and corn, and hay,
Than in her cold, unwilling arms
'Mid all the pomp of war's alarms
Her slaughter'd sons to lay.

Better the food of man to win
From her consenting mold,
Than fiercely, with a miser's zest,
Ransack and rend her shrinking breast
For glittering stones, or gold.

Yes, better that on lowliest tomb
The simple phrase appears,—
"*I am an husbandman,*" than claim
From History's scroll, a despot's name.
And rear, though nations call it *fame*,
A cenotaph of tears.

APRIL XXVIII.

"Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings."

PSALMS, viii: 2.

FATHER of our every blessing,
Thou, for whose unceasing care,
Heaven and earth are praise addressing
Hear thy little children's prayer.

Wisdom with our stature grant us,
Goodness for each growing year,
Nor let folly's wiles enchant us
From our duty's sacred sphere.

Father! may we all inherit
The dear Saviour's lowly mind,
His serene and loving spirit,
Ever truthful, ever kind:

So, when life with us is ending,
When the pulse forsakes the breast,
Shall our happy souls ascending
With thy holy angels rest.

APRIL XXIX.

"Praise waiteth for Thee, Oh God, in Zion"

PSALMS, LXV: 1.

THANKS for the Sabbath's holy ray!
Which like a chain of gold doth bind
More closely to the angel-train,
Each lowly and obedient mind,
While in their Father's House they meet,
Their prayers and praises to repeat.

Thanks for the Gospel's blessed voice!
 That lamp from sin and woe to save,
 Which guides us through the maze of life
 And bids the darkness of the grave
 Glow with a light that can not die,
 The rainbow of Eternity.

Thanks for our lengthen'd span of time,
 While many a younger one hath fled
 Like rose-bud, fading ere its prime:
 Oh Thou! who from the voiceless dead
 Repriev'st us still, accept our praise,
 And write Thy wisdom on our days.

APRIL XXX.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, it is more blessed to give than to receive." ACTS, xx: 35.

"To give, or to receive, which is most blessed?"
 Make trial, Friend, if thou dost doubt the word
 Of Him who spake as man ne'er spake before:—
 Begin to-day.

Do any quake with cold?
 Bid the bright fire light up his dreary hut;
 Disperse thy garments, ere the moth invade;
 Be tender to the sick; unfold the page
 Of knowledge to the uninstructed mind;
 Enter the prison, with a voice of cheer;
 Lend to the fallen one thy helping hand,

And add no blame; lead the poor wanderer back;
Seat the lone exile at thy cheerful board;
Be courteous to thy foe; embrace thy friend;
In thine own home, speak the sweet words of love;
Make the poor house-dog happy; let the ant
And every harmless insect pass unscathed
In their Great Maker's name; with no barb'd hook,
Distress the finny people of the flood;
Nor for thy sport the callow nest bereave,
Stifling the song in blood; draw back the hand
That shakes the sharp lash o'er the laboring beast;
Remove the stone that bars the traveler's way;
Make the bare desert blossom; in each nook
Of vacant ground, plant the fruit-bearing tree:
Dost ask, for whom? No matter. God doth know.

Learn this first lesson of humanity
Daily and well, and thou, perhaps, may'st need
No study of the second, for thou'lt know
The secret of our pilgrim happiness
On earth. The unexacting sympathy
That like the rain of Heaven falls sweet on all
Doth feed immortal flowers.

May.

MAY I.

“Who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.”

PSALMS, cxlvii: 8.

COME forth! come forth! at the dewy morn,
Come forth to the groves, mid the scented thorn;
There's a rushing of wings through the vernal sky,
A gleaming of plumes, like the rainbow's dye.
There are gushes of melody, wildly stirred,
A chant of love for the brooding bird,
And a warbled chorus from tree and spray,
Hail to thee, May!

Come, twine a wreath of the earliest green,
With cowslip buds and the violet sheen,
The daisy is up mid the tufted grass,
The king-cup nods as we gliding pass,
The fox-glove exults on the hillock's side,
And the hyacinth kindles the garden's pride,
And their petals thrill, as they whispering say,
Hail to thee, May!

List,—list to that sound, like the lute's faint sigh,
From the shaded dells where the mosses lie;
“The florist sought, with the spring's first ray,
Where his tulip-bulbs and his lilies lay,
Yet no man cared for our nameless bed,
Where the frost-chain bound us so dark and dread,
But He, who rules where the seraphs wait,
He remembered us all in our low estate,
He quickened our hearts mid the desolate sod,
Praise to our God!”

MAY II.

"I fell at his feet to worship him, and he said unto me,—See thou do it not: worship God."
 REVELATION, xix: 10.

WHOM did I worship in my youth?
 The beautiful, the brave,
 The good, the wise, the just, the kind,
 I was their willing slave;

Yet, one by one, to me they spake,
 We are your fellow-worms,
 Your brethren, for a Saviour's sake,
 But not celestial forms;

Yes, one by one, their voice I heard,
 Even from the burial-sod,—
 "Renounce all idols made of clay,
 And worship only God."

MAY III.

"Let there be light."
 GENESIS, i: 3.

LIGHT for the dreary vales
 Of ice-bound Labrador,
 Where the frost-king breathes on the slippery sails,
 Till the mariner wakes no more;
 Lift high the lamp that never fails,
 O'er that dark and sterile shore.

Light for the forest child!
An outcast though he be,
From the haunts where the sun of his childhood smiled,
And the country of the free;
Pour the hope of heaven o'er his desert wild,
For what hope on earth has he?

Light on the Hindoo shed!
On the maddening idol train,
The flame of the suttee is dire and red,
And the fakir faints with pain,
And the dying moan on their cheerless bed,
By the Ganges laved in vain.

Light for the Persian sky!
The Sophis' wisdom fades,
And the pearls of Ormus are poor to buy
Armor when death invades.
Hark! hark! 'tis the Christian teacher's sigh
From Ararat's mournful shades.

Light for the Burman vales!
For the islands of the sea!
For the coast where the slave-ship fills her sails
With sighs of agony,
And her kidnapped babes the mother wails
'Neath the lone banana tree!

Light for the ancient race
Exiled from Zion's rest!
Homeless they roam from place to place,
Benighted and oppressed,
They shudder at Sinai's fearful base,
Guide them to Calvary's breast.

MAY IV.

"In the morning, sow thy seed."

ECCLESIASTES, xi: 6.

WHEN the dews are fresh, and cool,
 In the morning, sow thy seed,
 While the bright-wing'd birds of hope
 Mix their music with the deed,
 Not at noon, when suns are high
 And the tares usurp the soil,
 Lest the thistle and the thorn
 Mar the promise of thy toil:

Not at evening, when the wain
 Homeward to the garner goes,
 And the lengthening shadows fall,
 And the reaper seeks repose;
 All too late the sowers care
 While the harvest joys proceed,
 Parent! with the dews of prayer,
 In the morning, sow thy seed.

MAY V.

"My times are in Thy Hand."

PSALMS, xxxi: 15.

THERE is a time of birth,
 The wailing infant's cry,
 The mother's yearning kiss,
 The strong, unspoken bliss
 Of young paternity.

There is a time of sport,
 For merry childhood's train,
 The gambol and the glee,
 The blossom on life's tree,
 That cometh not again.

There is a time of hope,
 When youth's affections twine,
 Mid pleasure's rosy light,
 Around the fair and bright,
 Like tendrils of the vine.

Oh when Death's sable cloud
 This scroll of life shall blot,
 Ruler of Sea and Land,
 My times are in Thy Hand,
 Forsake me not.

MAY VI.

"This is the day which the Lord hath made;—we will rejoice and be glad in it."

PSALMS, cxviii: 24.

SWEET day of rest,—begin!
 The week hath had its way,
 With care and strife and folly's din,
 And scarce a pause to pray.

The week its league hath kept
 In Mammon's mine to moil,
 Full wearily its votaries slept,
 And early rose to toil.

At morn, the sowers went
 Their earthly seed to cast,
 And some upon the winds were spent
 To reap the winds at last.

With many a sharp regret,
 And hope that vainly burned,
 'Mid the stern tasks the World hath set,
 Have we its lessons learned.

The week hath had its fill
 Of service and of speech,
 Six days and nights it ruled at will,
 But one, it shall not reach :

We see its dawning gem
 Gleam o'er the mountain's breast,
 Kneeling, we kiss its garment's hem,
 All hail! sweet Day of rest!

MAY VII.

"The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing. Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness."
 PSALMS, xli: 3.

WHEN sickness chains the frame
 And dims the tearful eye,
 When tossing in the grasp of pain
 On sleepless couch I lie,

Thou, who the untold pang did'st bear
Of Calvary's torturing tree,
Protect my spirit from despair,
Oh Lord, remember me.

Remove the rooted tares
That in my bosom spring
And threat the tender plants of hope
With their envenom'd sting,
Nor let of suffering and of sin,
My double burden be,
As healer of my soul come in,
Oh Lord, remember me.

The measure of my days,
How long I have to live,
Is known to Thee,—my strength sustain!
For man no help can give,
Proportion'd to my pressing need,
Let thy compassions be,
Have pity on a bruised reed,
O Lord, remember me.

If far from friends and home
Thou will'st that I should die,
Make Thou thine holy will mine own,
And strength and peace supply,
A smitten, yet a trusting soul,
Unto Thy feet I flee,
And though the darkest billows roll,
O Lord, remember me.

MAY VIII.

“Lord, I pray Thee, open his eyes, that he may see.”

2ND KINGS, vi: 17

THOU, who at the prophet's cry,
 When the Syrian host was nigh
 To his servant's eye reveal'd
 Sights from grosser sense concealed,
 All the hill-top cover'd high,
 With angelic company,
 Oh! to us, when pain or strife,
 Frowning, hedge the path of life,
 Deign with mercy's beam to show,
 Seraph-bands that round us glow,
 Heavenly hosts, a shining train,
 'Till our strength revives again,
 And we dread no mortal foe,
 Shielded and encompass'd so.

When, dejected and alone,
 In the hour of grief we moan,
 Comes there not a rushing sigh
 Of mysterious sympathy,
 Like *their* breath, who erst have trod
 With us, o'er this thorny sod?
 Father! whose unresting prayer
 Propp'd us 'mid our daily care,
 Mother! long by sickness bent,
 Yet with sympathy unspent,
 Sister! Brother! ever dear,
 Sharing with us, smile and tear,
 Son! an inmate of the tomb,—
 Daughter! smitten 'mid her bloom,

Friend! who sate at day's decline,
Clasping close our hand in thine,
Babe! who 'neath the spoiler's sting,
Cradle chang'd for cherub's wing,
Flit ye not, as shadows glide,
Gathering fondly to our side?
All unseen, for us ye feel,
All unseen, our wounds ye heal,
Pouring in your spirit-balm,
Girding us with angel-arm,
Though your features veil'd must be
By this cloud-wrought canopy,
Though your voice we may not hear,
Well we know, you hover near.

When in death's dark trance we lie,
Earth receding from our eye,
Sad affection's whisper'd word
Falling on our ear unheard,
Maker of our fainting frame!
From whose breath this being came,
Wilt thou to our swimming sight
Show these ministers of light?
Who with snowy pinions spread
Waiting for the righteous dead,
Bear him through the trackless sky,
Where his Saviour's mansions lie,
Where, each mortal conflict o'er,
He shall need their aid no more.

MAY IX.

"Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

MATTHEW, vi: 12.

OH, harden not thy heart, my Son!
 To human guilt and woe,
 For we are sinners every one,
 And doubtless should be all undone,
 Did God no mercy show:

The boon of pitying kindness share
 Even with thy bitterest foe,
 So shalt thou, in thy fervent prayer,
 To heaven, the great petition dare,
 Forgive the debt I owe.

MAY X.

"Take fast hold of instruction, let her not go, keep her, for she is thy life."

PROVERBS, iv: 13.

Now, while the buds of hope and joy
 On their green stems unfold,
 Bow to Instruction's voice, and seek
 For wisdom, more than gold;

Enjoy the flowers that by thy side
In life's bright pathway glow,
And bid the incense of their pride
Back to the Author flow ;

And so, the rugged thorns control
That round thy footsteps cling,
That Christ's sweet spirit in thy soul,
May neutralize their sting ;

Then shall fair Hope's unsullied wreath,
For thee its tints prolong,
And earth's frail harp the prelude breathe
To heaven's unending song.

MAY XI.

"All thy works shall praise thee, Oh Lord! and thy saints shall bless thee."

PSALMS, cxlv: 10.

THE first-born rose of vernal prime
That opes its bosom rare,
In fragrance on the dewy morn
Breathes out its silent prayer.

The summer-bird on raptured wing,
That cleaves the vaulted sky,
Up to the great Creator pours
Its gushing minstrelsy :

Rich Autumn, with her fruitful hoard,
 Her harvests ripening fair,
 The golden sheaf, and loaded wain,
 Extols the Giver's care:

Even Winter in his Sabbath rest
 Adores the King of might,
 And every snow flake speaks of Him
 Who robes the earth in white.

Thou art his servant, O my soul,
 By birth, by choice, by vow,
 By bounties of each rolling year,—
 Prove thy allegiance now:

Yea, prove it as each passing day
 Unfolds its pinions fleet,
 By deeds of love, by thoughts of prayer
 By strains of worship sweet:

Make this brief life a song of praise
 Where'er thy lot may be,
 And learn the language here below
 Of heaven's eternity.

MAY XII.

"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed."

PSALMS, CXXVI: 6.

THE rooted seed o'erpowered the thorn,
 The weed, the worm, the blight,
 While the fresh leaf and vigorous corn
 Successive, cheered the sight:

What gave so soon the harvest-pride,
 To life's unfolding years?
 The Heavenly Husbandman replied,
 The seed was steeped in tears.

MAY XIII.

"He shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

PSALMS, CXXVI : 6

BEAR precious seed, and go
 Forth to thy work of toil,
 Where'er the unerring Master's hand
 Shall designate the soil.

Perchance in native clime,
 Perchance beyond the sea,
 Where'er his love appoints the field,
 That is the place for thee.

Though labor mark the path,
 And grief thy heart assail,
 Go fearless forth, and trust in Him
 Whose promise can not fail.

Sow precious seed, in hope
 Its blessed fruits to see
 In God's own good, appointed time,
 That is the time for thee.

Nor doubt the contrite tear
 That dews the furrowed clay,
 Shall multiply the ripened sheaves
 At the great harvest day.

MAY XIV.

“What lack I yet?”

MATTHEW, xix: 20.

“WHAT lack I yet?” Oh blinded heart,
 Buoy'd up by thoughtless pride,
 Unconscious of thine own desert,
 And borne on folly's tide,
 Thou lackest much, couldst thou but see
 How Heaven's just Eye regardeth thee,

“What lack I yet?” Thy foes can say,
 And wiser 'twere to heed
 The thorns they plant beside thy way
 Than flattery's hollow reed;
 They wake perchance, to watch and weep,
 The other lures to dangerous sleep.

“What lack I yet?” Oh, Judge Divine,
 Low at Thy feet I fall,
 Poor, needy Créaturé! prone to sin
 And destitute of all
 That might commend my soul to Thee
 Save helplessness and misery.

MAY XV.

"I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning."

PSALMS, lix: 16.

How sweet to meet the vernal rays,
When fresh from Heaven they dart,
And while retreating Winter cold
Unchains the prisoned flower, to hold
Communion with the heart,

To ask it whence its fondest hopes,
Its deepest cares proceed,
What wakes the cherish'd fount of joy,
What chosen themes its prayers employ,
Or stir its pitying deed,

Remind it of the bounteous Hand
That still its life sustains,
And bids the crimson tide of health
With all its superflux of wealth
Flow through the bounding veins,

And as the mists on pinions white,
From vale and thicket rise,
Incite its powers o'er earth to soar,
And with enkindling warmth adore
The Ruler of the skies,

Even as the birds from spray to spray
Responsive carols sing,
Bid it attune its inward lyre
And with Creation's hymn conspire
To praise Creation's king.

MAY XVI.

"We shall all be changed."

1ST CORINTHIANS, XV : 51.

OH speak of Death,
 But as the passage from one pleasant room
 Unto another, in our Father's House :
 A higher and a better, so we trust.
 —And if that way seem dark, what matters it?
 Faith hath a lamp to light it, and we hold
 Fast by His hand, who is "the truth and life"
 While thro' the vista, sigh the soft, sweet tones,
 Of those who went before us,—“Hail! all hail,
 Come dear ones,—clasp our hands and part no more.

MAY XVII.

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee."

ISAIAH, xliii : 2.

OLD Ocean hath a fearful path
 Across his heaving breast
 The might of beauty, and of wrath
 Is on his briny crest,
 Yet tho' his hoarsest thunders roll
 Go forth, devoid of care,
 The precious promise in thy soul
 That God is with thee there.

Storms on the deep!—The clouds grow dark,
 The mocking winds arise,
 Fierce billows threat the trembling bark,
 And rock to surge replies,
 Thou hast a fortress, trusting soul,
 Thou hast a shield of prayer,
 A God, whose word the waves control,
 Is He not with thee, there?

And when, once more, thy native land
 In outline dimly sweet,
 Shall as a beckoning Angel stand
 Thy watchful eye to greet,
 And when thy welcom'd feet shall tread
 Thy home, like Eden fair,
 Joy's grateful garland round thy head,
 Thy God be with thee there.

MAY XVIII.

“How camest thou in hither,—not having a wedding garment?”

MATTHEW, xxii: 12

GRANT me a wedding garment,
 My Saviour and my King,
 As to Thy Sacramental board
 My trembling vows I bring!

Oh! if I have a passport
 Here, with Thy saints to press,
 And break the bread, and taste the cup
 That Thou on earth didst bless,

And if I have a promise
 O'er this frail flesh to rise,
 And share a glorious banquet, spread
 Eternal in the skies,

Where past is every sorrow,
 And foiled the spoiler's sting,
 Grant me the wedding garment, now,
 My Saviour and my King.

MAY XIX.

"Jesus said, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

MATTHEW, xiv: 31.

WHAT have I with doubt to do?
 Is my Saviour strong to save?
 Hath he crush'd the spoiler's sting?
 Snatch'd the victory from the grave?

Saith He, in his Holy Word,
 "Whoso cometh unto me,
 Shall in no wise be cast out?"
 Is His promise true as free?

Is the fitness He requireth,
 Earnestly to seek His face,
 Feel our need,—repent our folly,
 And receive the boundless grace?

Shall we then distrust His goodness?
 Shall we disobey His voice?
 Shun the light, and walk in darkness
 When He bids us to rejoice?

Shall we bow in heathen sorrow
 Mourning all our journey through?
 Fearing, murmuring, disbelieving?
 What have we with doubt to do?

MAY XX.

"Wherefore I praised the dead, which are already dead, more than the living, which are yet alive"

ECCLESIASTES, iv : 2.

THEY dread no storms that lower,
 No perish'd joys bewail,
 They pluck no thorn-clad flower
 Nor drink of streams that fail,
 There is no tear-drop in their eye,
 No change upon their brow,
 Their placid bosom heaves no sigh,
 Though all earth's idols bow.

Who are so greatly blest?
 From whom hath sorrow fled?
 Who share such deep, unbroken rest
 Where all things toil? *The dead!*
 The holy dead. Why weep ye so
 Above yon sable-bier?
 Thrice blessed! they have done with woe,
 The living claim the tear.

Go to their sleeping bowers,
 Deck their low couch of clay
 With earliest spring's soft-breathing flowers:
 And when they fade away,
 Think of the amaranthine wreath,
 The garlands never dim,
 And tell me, why thou fly'st from death,
 Or hid'st thy friends from him.

We dream,—but they awake;
 Dread visions mar our rest;
 Through thorns and snares our way we take,
 And yet we mourn the blest!
 For spirits round the Eternal Throne,
 How vain the tears we shed,
They are the living,—they alone
 Whom thus we call *the dead!*

MAY XXI.

“Lord, I believe.”

MARK. ix: 24.

“LORD, I believe!” the father cried,
 His suffering child who brought,
 And mov'd by agonizing love,
 Restoring mercy sought,

And still, the urgency of prayer
 Blent with his tide of grief,
 And trembling tears bedew'd the words
 “Lord, help my unbelief!”

Then, with that contrite cry for aid
 Which from the spirit burst,
 The faith was born, which casts away
 All self-reliant trust,

Which resteth not in cold assent,
 Or reason's lifeless form,
 But meekly bears a Saviour's cross,
 In sunshine, or in storm,

And, tho' the clouds of mystery frown
 Around this darken'd vale,
 Still waits, and walks, and works by love,
 The faith that can not fail.

MAY XXII.

"Help thou mine unbelief."

MARK, ix: 24.

WHEN musing where are lifeless laid
 The idols of our trust,
 Close sealed in death's sepulchral shade,
 And moldering into dust,
 Yet hearing they shall rise afresh
 From their consuming bed,
 And every bone be clothed with flesh
 On which the worms had fed,
 If still beside the tomb we bend,
 In desolating grief.
 And deeply mourn the buried friend,
 Lord, help our unbelief.

When on our sins, from day to day,
 With trembling fear we look,
 And know that every evil thought
 Hath record in Thy book,
 And feel our ingrate hearts each hour
 Thy love and precepts spurn,
 And to the false delights of earth
 With treacherous ardor turn,
 Yet hear Thee offer heaven to those
 Who are of sinners chief,—
 'Mid all our wanderings, all our woes,
 Lord, help our unbelief.

MAY XXIII.

'Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt.'

MATTHEW, xxvi: 39.

THOU lovest well thine own blind way,
 Poor heart of sin, and pain!
 Though frail thy purpose of a day,
 And all thy wisdom vain,

Thou shrinkest from the fires that cross
 Thy temper, and thy joy,
 And purge away the blackening dross
 That would thy gold alloy,

Thou tremblest at the blasts that sweep
 Thine airy castles down,
 Though there in wealth and pride to sleep
 Might be to lose thy crown,

Thou at the piercing thorn dost start,
The yoke revolting bear,
Unmindful that affliction's dart
Doth mark a Father's care:

Oh! rather His unerring test
With filial prayer endure,
Believing that His will is best,
And every promise sure.

MAY XXIV.

"Defend the poor and fatherless."

PSALMS, lxxxii: 3.

MANY a gift doth Love bestow,
On the sons of want and woe,
As with pity by her side,
O'er the earth her footsteps glide,
Yet she seems amid her care,
Most an angel's form to wear,
When she bends in meekness low
O'er the lonely orphan's woe.

Heaven-born Charity doth take
Many a form, for Jesus' sake,
O'er the mountain and the wave,
Wide she speeds to heal and save;
But the hearts that feel her power
And within their own sweet bower
Deign to bless the orphan's lot,
Shall not be by God forgot.

MAY XXV.

“My voice shalt Thou hear in the morning.”

PSALMS, V: 3.

PRAISE to our Father, God,
With the first dawning light,
Who watchful drew his angel-guard
Around us through the night,

And while so many die,
Or lost in anguish, weep,
Or on the couch of suffering lie,
Gave us His blessed sleep.

With every leaf that springs
Fresh from the nightly shower,
With every bird that waking sings
Amid its nested bower,

Let our heart-prompted strain
Harmoniously ascend,
Until through Christ's dear love we gain
The life that hath no end.

MAY XXVI.

"God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness."

2ND CORINTHIANS, iv: 6

MIDNIGHT on the stormy ocean!
Tumult mid the blast and wave
Every shrieking shroud in motion
None to succor, none to save,
Every star in terror hiding,
Every refuge wrapped in gloom,
And a slender plank dividing
From the drear and watery tomb,
Still, oh Lord, thy mercy liveth,
Thy compassion answereth prayer,
And Thy blest remembrance giveth
Solace mid that deep despair.

Midnight, and the time of weeping!
Wild the tides of anguish roll,
Pain and grief like sentries keeping
Guard above the prostrate soul,
Sympathy is weak to aid it,
Earthly comforters are vain,
Only he, the God who made it,
Can its agony restrain:
Then his love, with strong dominion,
And his truth's resistless sway,
Like an angel's radiant pinion,
Turneth darkness into day.

MAY XXVII.

“He will beautify the meek with salvation.”

PSALMS, cxlix: 4.

WHOM will our Father beautify?
 Those whom the world call great,
 Who, clad in silk and purple, boast
 Their pomp of high estate?

Whom will our Father beautify?
 The young, the fair, the brave?
 A garland on their brow they bear
 That withers at the grave:

But with approval of the skies
 That language fails to speak,
 He deigns to robe the lowly soul,
 And beautify the meek.

MAY XXVIII.

“He shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh.”

JEREMIAH, xvii: 6

THERE falls a bless'd rain on the desolate scene,
 The long-withered herbage is healthful and green,
 New verdure replaces the bramble and thorn,
 In dry, sterile regions fresh fountains are born,
 The murmur of streamlets rejoices the ear,
 Wake, heath of the desert,—salvation is near.

There breathes a soft wind o'er the bones of the slain,
 It hath clothed them with flesh, they are living again,
 Like the host of the Lord, in bright armor they stand,
 Their banners float out, at His word of command,
 The wilderness smiles on their gorgeous array,
 Wake, heath of the desert, and welcome their way.

There sweeps a black cloud o'er the blue of the sky,
 Hoarse thunders are threatening, the tempest draws nigh,
 The chariot of God rolleth on in its ire,
 The mountains are humbled, the vallies aspire,
 Hark!—the scorner, the slumberer, their folly deplore,
 Wake, heath of the desert, ere time be no more.

MAY XXIX.

"A day in Thy courts is better than a thousand."

PSALMS, lxxxiv : 10.

HAIL! consecrated spot,
 Here would I choose my lot
 Of Sabbath praise,
 Until his icy hand,
 Who cuts this mortal band,
 Shall close my days.

Oh! holy men of prayer
 Let me your worship share,
 Until I see
 Yon hosts in glorious light,
 Yon angels robed in white,
 A goodly company,

Until my raptured ear
 Eternal songs shall hear
 With harpings blest,
 And in the Church above,
 Whose ritual is love,
 Find perfect rest.

MAY XXX.

“Giving thanks always, for all things.”

EPHESIANS, v: 20.

LORD of the bird, and the green leaf, that pour
 Their vernal matin forth in bud, and song,
 Dost thou not claim from the frail, human heart
 The same fresh incense, oft withheld too long?
 Dost thou not bid, when the wild storm is past,
 That it should yield to Thee, with tearful trust,
 Each cherish'd tendril smitten by the blast,
 Each riven blossom humbled in the dust?
 And firm in cheerful and confiding hope,
 Admit the wisdom that it fails to see,
 And from its sackcloth and its ashes raise
 A strain of prayerful melody to Thee,
 Offering with equal faith and equal praise
 The sunbeam, or the cloud that marks its fleeting days?

MAY XXXI.

"Then I said, I shall die in my nest."

JOB, xxix: 18.

DIE in thy nest?

How know'st thou? Who hath given
 Promise like this? Did the stern Archer make
 Such reservation? Will he keep the pledge?
 His office is to smite, and not to hold
 Parley with any one of woman born.

Die in thy nest?

Why, from thy wandering course
 O'er vale, or ocean, to a stranger clime,
 Or even thy daily range among the flowers,
 Who told thee that thou shouldst return again?

— *Thy nest?*

Some have come home and found no nest,
 Bough wreck'd by winds, tree broken, birdlings gone,
 Forest uprooted, and the very name
 Forgotten, that was once a household song.
 Death hath a swift wing, that overmastereth thine,
 And reaps austerely, where he ne'er hath strewn.
 So, trust not, brother, a reprieve from him,
 But with a victor's eye, above his power,
 Leave *when* and *where* to God, and be content,

June.

JUNE I.

"The Lord is my Shepherd."

PSALMS, xxiii: 1.

WHO is thy Shepherd, sportive Lamb?
 Mid the bright vernal scene,
 Dipping thy foot in the waters still,
 And gamboling wide at thine own sweet will
 Over the pastures green?
 Frosts will come, fountains fail,
 Drifted snows load the vale;
 Lamb! when wintry tempests roll
 Who will shield thee from the cold?
 Christ is the Shepherd of thy soul,
 Come to his fold.

Who is thy Shepherd, wandering Sheep? .
 Love, with his ardent eye?
 Wealth, leaning on a wand of gold?
 Power, in his palace, sternly cold?
 Fame, with the clarion-cry?
 Love changes, Wealth cheats,
 Power falters, Fame fleets,
 O'er summer skies, wild tempests roll,
 The gauds of earth grow dim;
 Christ is the Shepherd of thy soul,
 Follow thou Him.

JUNE II.

“Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart.”

PSALMS, xxxvii: 4.

DAUGHTER, the book divine
 To which we turn for aid,
 When prosperous skies unclouded shine,
 Or dark-wing'd storms invade,
 Is ever open to thine eye,
 Imprint it on thy soul,
 And wisdom that can never die
 Shall thy young thoughts control.

Sweetest, the cheek of bloom,
 Alas! how soon 'twill wear
 The clay-cold coloring of the tomb;
 Then, while thine own is fair,
 Low at His feet imploring fall,
 Who loves the humble mind,
 Whose glorious promise is, that all
 Who early seek, shall find.

Come, ere thy hand hath wove
 The first fresh wreaths of Spring,
 Come, ere a worn and withered love
 Is all thou hast to bring,
 Remember thy Creator's power,
 While life from care is free,
 And when the days of darkness lower,
 He will remember thee.

Yes, give thy heart to Him,
 While budding hope is green,
 And when thy mother's eye is dim
 To every earthly scene,
 When this fond arm that circles thee,
 Must chill and powerless lie,
 Our parting tear the pledge shall be
 Of union in the sky.

JUNE III.

"Idle in the market-place"

MATTHEW, XX: 3.

Idle in the market-place!

Poor day-laborer, can this be?
 Who thy daily bread shall earn?
 Who thy wages give to thee?

Idle in the market-place!

When the wearied reapers bend,
 Wrestling with the bearded wheat,
 And the harvest soon will end?

When the ripened field is wide,
 And the morning flies apace,
 How, contented, canst thou bide
 Idle in the market-place?

Listen to the toiling ant:

“Work,” she murmureth, “and be wise;”
 “Work,” the unresting waters say;
 “Work,” the fruitful earth replies.

Nature in a thousand forms
 Gives thee counsel, not in vain;
 Heaven, that highest teacher, cries,
 “*Work*,” and thy salvation gain.

JUNE IV.

“He hath made every thing beautiful in his time.”

ECCLESIASTES, iii: 11.

Oh, God! how beautiful is Earth,
 In sunbeam or in shade:
 Her forests with their waving arch;
 Her flowers that gem the glade;

 Her hillocks white with fleecy flocks;
 Her fields with grain that glow;
 Her sparkling streamlets, deep and broad,
 That through the valleys flow;

 Her crested waves that clasp the shore,
 And lift their anthem loud;
 Her mountains, with their solemn brows,
 That woo the yielding cloud.

Oh, God! how beautiful is Life,
That 'Thou dost lend us here,
So cheered with hopes that line the cloud,
And joys that gem the tear;

With cradle-hymns of mothers young,
And tread of youthful feet,
That scarce in their elastic bound
Bow down the grass-flowers sweet;

With brightness round the pilgrim's staff,
Who at the setting sun
Beholds the golden gate thrown wide,
And all his work well done.

But if this Earth, which changes mar,
This life, to death that leads,
Are made so beautiful by Him,
From whom all good proceeds,

How glorious must that region be
Where all the pure and blest,
From every fear and sorrow free,
Attain unbroken rest.

JUNE V.

"And Gideon came to Jordon, and passed over, he, and the three hundred men that were with him, faint, yet pursuing." JUDGES, viii: 4.

OF the crystal streamlet taste,
Warriors, in your eager haste,
Here refresh your wearied line,
Ere in battle-strife ye join.

Some upon the verdant strand,
Scoop the water with their hand,
Others, on their knees supine,
For a deeper draught incline.
But their chieftain standing by,
Mark'd them with an eagle-eye,
And his heaving bosom fir'd,
As he spake the doom inspir'd.

“By the few who scoop'd the wave,
Shall our God, his Israel save,
On, ye chosen, on with me,
Yours the toil, the victory.”

Small the band, yet on they prest,
Heaven's own courage in their breast,
And the strong and haughty foe,
Covering all the vale below,
At their onset bold and high,
At their trumpet's fearful cry
Prince, and chariot, turn'd and fled,
Helpless in that hour of dread.

Soldiers of a glorious head,
While this leagur'd earth ye tread,
Lightly taste of pleasure's wave,
Bow not down like passion's slave,
Lest, while others watchful stand,
Ye forget the promis'd land,
And thy Leader's voice decree
Joy to them and shame to thee.

JUNE VI.

“Why seek ye the living, among the dead?”

LUKE, xxiv: 5.

YE lock the vault, ye bar the tomb,
And to their keeping drear
Commit the precious treasure, borne
Upon the sable bier,
But that which made your idol dear,
The essence so refined,
That woke the sigh, the smile, the tear,
The Soul, they may not bind.

Again ye come,—the hoarded gem
O'er which ye rear'd with care
The marble arch, the fretted shrine,
The sculptur'd column rare,
Where is it? lo! what fearful change!
The flesh hath mock'd your trust,
The bone its fellow bone forsook,
And moldering turn'd to dust.

Thus o'er the close-seal'd tomb, where erst
The Lord of glory slept,
The Roman soldiers, still, and stern,
Their sleepless vigil kept,
Dawn came, the affrighted watchmen quail'd
The buried form had fled,
And griev'd affection vainly sought
The living 'mid the dead.

JUNE VII.

"The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another."

GENESIS, xxxi : 49

NOT of the boisterous sea,
Not of the tempest's power,
Not of the long and weary way,
Speak at this sacred hour.

Not of the pirate's steel,
God of the traveler, hear!
And from our parting cup of love
Wring out these dregs of fear.

Art thou a God at home,
Where the bright fireside smiles,
And not abroad upon the wave,
'Mid danger's darkest wiles?

What though the eyes so dear
To distant regions turn,
Their tender language in our hearts
Like vestal fire shall burn:

What though the tones belov'd
Respond not to our pain,
We'll keep their music in the soul
Until we meet again.

Farewell! we're travelers all,
With one blest goal in view,
One rest, one everlasting home
Sweet friends, a sweet adieu!

JUNE VIII.

“Peace,—be still.”

MARK, iv: 39.

A STORM upon Judea's lake!
 Thunder amid the hills!
 Winds and waves to warfare wake!
 The ship with water fills!
 “Master! Master! carest Thou not
 That we perish?” Look! Behold!
 Clouds no more the welkin blot,
 Baffled are the surges bold,
 For in energy of will
 He hath risen from his sleep,
 He hath said unto the deep,
 Peace! Be still.

A tempest in the soul!
 O'er swelling billows tost,
 The passions rage and roll,
 Alas! the helm is lost!
 “Master! Master! wilt Thou see
 Shipwreck, and withhold thy care?
 Let thy foes triumphant be?
 Leave the erring to despair?”
 Lo,—His deeds His word fulfill,
 For He breaks their tyrant sway,
 And His heavenly accents say,
 Peace! Be still!

JUNE IX.

“It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in man.”

PSALMS, cxviii: 8.

Put confidence in man,
And thou, perchance, may'st know
The shelter of the driven leaf
When whelming whirlwinds blow,
The sympathy that gleams
From the cold, frosted eye
When double-minded friendship lays
Its Protean vestment by.

Put confidence in man,
And thou, perchance, wilt see
The riven tendrils of the vine
Symbolical of thee,
While on the withering buds
That in thy heart were bred
The foot of Love, to Hatred turn'd,
All pitiless shall tread.

Put confidence in man,
And thou, perchance, shalt feel
How keen ingratitude may edge
The insidious traitor's steel,
And while thy spirit shrinks
Astonish'd and afraid,
Oh! put thy confidence in God,
And never be dismay'd.

JUNE X.

"I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me."

PSALMS, cxlii: 5.

"No man would know thee!" Why was this,
King of the lyre, on Salem's height?
Had sorrow so thy visage marr'd?
Or changeful friendship dimm'd their sight?

They knew thee well on Israel's throne,
When humbled foe and captive quail'd,
But in thy flight from rebel power
Their Shimei-memories strangely fail'd.

They knew thee well, in flattery's hour,
And prais'd thee loud with loyal lips,
But mid Adullam's dreary cave
Their fond affections found eclipse.

Yet not to thee alone, oh, king,
Is such forgetfulness confin'd
For still do ebbing fortunes bring
Effaced impressions o'er the mind.

But thou didst know what Friend was thine,
When earth's deceptive props forsook,
And deeply grave that truth divine,
Our lesson in thy holy book;

So, should it be our lot to learn
How love declines, as fortunes wane,
May we, like thee, confiding turn
Where none shall ever trust in vain.

JUNE XI.

"I will joy in the God of my salvation."

HABAKKUK, iii: 18.

SALVATION is my theme,
High praise my blest employ,
Sadness is treason, in His realm
Whose spirit calls to joy.

Nature obeys His voice,
Her fountains freely flow,
The leaping streamlets wake the flowers,
Rejoicing as they go.

Even insect-life is glad,
Birds spread the raptur'd wing,
The lambkins in green pastures play,
The whitening harvests sing.

Then why should deathless mind
Mourn o'er its earthly span?
Sorrow and silence mar the lot
God meteth out to man.

Three teachers seek his love,
Their precepts form his creed,
Meek Joy, and true Humility
To heavenly Wisdom lead:

And yet three other guides
Are to the pilgrim given,
Firm Faith, and clear-eyed Hope, lead on
To Charity, and Heaven.

JUNE XII.

"There came out two women, and the wind was in their wings."

ZECARIAH, v: 9.

O'ER realms of Fancy broad and bright,
Where wild romance held sway,
Like butterflies, 'mid countless flowers
They took their devious way,
Now high, now low, disdain all
Reality of things,
Above this work-day world they flew,
"The wind was in their wings."

Where glittering tides of fashion roll,
And gorgeous barges ride,
Whose silken pennons court the gale,
In revelry and pride,
Where useful industry is scorn'd,
And syren pleasure sings,
Without a helm their sails they spread,
"The wind was in their wings."

But Fancy show'd a different phase,
Coquettish in her mood,
And all becalmed the barges lay,
On Luxury's ebbing flood,
And Wealth withdrew the golden spoil
To which its votary clings,
Faith, Hope, and Charity, that win
The Crown of Rest in Heaven.

So, since this life is not a farce
 Where painted puppets play,
 We fain would act an useful part
 With firmness, day by day,
 Nor falter when an adverse shade
 Dark disappointment flings,
 Even though the prosperous winds withhold
 Their impulse from our wings.

JUNE XIII.

“Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee,—and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee.”

JOB, xii: 7.

THE wild bee o'er the prairie
 Sought honey for her hive,
 The stream came singing from the rock
 As though it were alive,

While the solemn mountain frowning
 Beheld its devious way,
 And like a Mentor, old and stern,
 Reproved the thoughtless play.

The crimson oriole flaunted
 Like lover through the glade,
 And paid gay homage to the flowers
 In beauty's garb array'd;

But lightly there before him
 The humming-bird would rove,
 While bud and bell with rapture thrilled
 To meet his kiss of love.

The beetle and the butterfly
Met on their glittering track,
The snail moved onward, slow and sure,
His house upon his back;

And life to all was beautiful,
As, like the jeweled ray,
They gleamed in Nature's joyance sweet
On that bright summer's day.

Oh, frail and winged creatures!
That perish in an hour,
Methinks ye are our teachers,
Mid all our pomp and power,

Mid all our vaunt of learning,
Mid all our pride of sway,
Be pitiful, and teach us
Before ye pass away,

How to be simply happy
Amid a world so fair,
And in the confidence of trust
Accept our Father's care.

JUNE XIV.

"They have laid their swords under their heads."

EZEKIEL, xxxii: 27.

UNDER their heads they have laid their swords,
Who turn'd the nations pale,
With the threat and boast of their banner'd host,
And their masses of moving mail,

At their stern command mov'd the warrior band,
The soldier struck his tent,
And with stifled sigh from his home to die
The youthful conscript went,
They stirr'd the sleep of the desert deep
With trumpet and battle-cry,
Scattering men's bones mid the sands and stones
To bleach 'neath a wintry sky,
The wave of their hand was the law of the land
Where their conquering legions swept,
Like the voice of a god was their tyrant nod,
Yet they slumber in dust, unwept.

Under their swords they have laid their heads,
They shall trouble the earth no more,
They molder away, like the coarsest clay
Of the serf that their livery wore,
No vine they bade, with its clustering shade,
O'er the quiet hillocks spread,
But they ravaged the plain with its ripening grain
That the poor man's children fed,
They led the fire over tower and spire
And village in rural pride,
They drench'd the soil with the blood of toil
Till it shrank from the loathed tide,
They have gone, they are fled, like a dream they
have sped,
They have acted their gorgeous part,
They have left a name on the tomb of fame,
And a curse in the living heart.

JUNE XV.

"No man knoweth of his sepulcher unto this day."

DEUTERONOMY, xxxiv : 6.

LAWGIVER of the Hebrews!—who didst stand
 On Sinai's summit, face to face with God,
 And thence descending, all majestic bear
 The sacred tablets, by His finger traced,
 A glory on thy brow, that kept aloof
 The awe-struck people,—is thy hallow'd tomb
 Unvisited, unchronicled, unknown?
 How many an eye amid the shaded dells
 And clustering terebinths of Moab, sought
 That place of rest, in vain. 'Twas not for man
 To find the angel-buried.

Age on age
 Swept by in long procession, and went down,
 And men of doubtful name, superbly rear'd
 High towering obelisk and monument
 For their own sculptur'd effigies, but still
 None knoweth of thy sepulcher.

'Tis well,—
 What if they did? 'Twere nothing unto thee,
 And unto them, but little.

Thou hast left
 Thine epitaph in deeds, that all may read,
 And words of wisdom, in the Book Divine.
 So teach us, Spirit of all Grace, to hold
 The casket for our clay of small account,
 But bid our living Memory, clad in robes
 Of truth and goodness, walk its daily round
 Among mankind, and point their souls to Thee.

JUNE XVI.

"Mountains, whereon grow roses and lilies, whereby I will fill thy children with joy."

2ND ESDRAS, ii: 19.

WHEN thou walkest in the fields,
Father! with thy listening son,
Point him where the mountain's head
Hath its towering grandeur won,

Where the lofty groves aspire,
Where the solemn forests nod,
And upon their living arch
Raise his plastic mind to God.

When thou walkest by the way,
Mother! with thy little one,
Where the sweet, wild roses grow,
Where the uncultured lilies run,

Show her how their colors grow,
How their baby-blossoms start,
Till their fragrance and their bloom
Touch the rapture of her heart,

Tell her then, that He who spread
All these beauties in His love,
Seeks His children thus to train
For a higher bliss above.

JUNE XVII.

"The Sabbath was made for man."

MARK, ii: 27.

ASSIST us, Lord, this sacred morn
Which Thou hast made so fair,
On wings of holy thought to rise,
Where saints and angels are,

We may not in our feeble speech
Describe their blest employ,
Nor with these darken'd eyes descry
Their plenitude of joy,

We only know, in love they dwell,
In day that hath no night,
We know Thy glory is their praise,
Thy service their delight,

And may we, with obedient care
So frame our lives below,
And so, to all whom thou hast made
Such christian kindness show,

That as our earthly Sabbaths here
Glide by on rapid wing,
Each one may fit us more and more,
Amid their choir to sing.

JUNE XVIII.

"Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."

PROVERBS, xvi: 18.

PRIDE, take thy fated cup,—the insidious world
 Hath drugg'd it for thee, tho' her brow was bright,
 Yea, while her lip with promis'd bliss is curl'd
 She ofttime mingleth wine with aconite:

Athens of old, her sentenced victim bade
 After his hemlock draught, to walk about
 Until his limbs grew weary, and he made
 His last repose. So shall thy date run out;

But yet repine not. Thou hast had thy will.
 Life's pomp and gaud, its tinsel and its plume,
 Didst thou not choose of these to take thy fill,
 Scorning the humble who, 'mid blight or bloom,

Kept on their narrow path by rock and thorn,
 And meekly bow'd the knee unto the manger-born?

JUNE XIX.

"Rejoice evermore."

1ST THESSALONIANS, v: 16.

REJOICE, true follower of our Lord,
 If not in earthly gain,
 Requited love, exulting power.
 Or fashion's gaudy train,

Yet, in the work of prayer and praise,
 In faith that never dies,
 The patient, undelusive hope
 That builds above the skies.

And when the solemn Angel comes,
 That silent, loving guide,
 Who opes the spirit-gate that leads
 To our Redeemer's side,

Lay thy cold hand without a fear
 On his dark wing, and soar,
 Where saints and seraphs round the Throne
 Rejoice for evermore.

JUNE XX.

"Jesus said,—Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more."

JOHN, viii: 11

YES! look to Heaven. Earth scorns to lend
 Refuge, or ray thy steps to guide;
 Bids pity with suspicion blend,
 And slander check compassion's tide

We will not ask, what thorn hath found
 Admittance to thy bosom fair,
 If love hath dealt a traitor's wound,
 Or hopeless folly woke despair:

We only say, that sinless clime,
 To which is raised thy timid eye,
 Hath pardon for the deepest crime,
 Though erring man that doom deny:

We only say, the prayerful breast,
 The gushing tear of contrite pain,
 Have power to ope that portal blest,
 Where vaunting pride must toil in vain.

JUNE XXI.

"The shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

ISAIAH, xxxii: 2.

HIGH noon at summer, and the solstice burns
 Unmitigated, with a tropic heat,
 To curtain'd nest the songless warbler turns,
 The pastured herds to shrinking brooks retreat,

The parch'd earth cracks, the red-brow'd farmer throws
 His hoe upon the corn-hills where he wrought,
 And 'neath the elm tree seeks an hour's repose
 Or from his canteen quaffs the home-brew'd draught.

But thou, oh thirsting heart of man, still flying
 To broken cisterns for relief unfound,
 Still on the flattery of the world relying
 That with its spear-point aims a deadly wound,

Hide in the shadow of that Rock of trust,
Jehovah's Name!—that stands when all beside is dust.

JUNE XXII.

“They weave the spider's web.”

ISAIAH, lix: 5.

THEY toil by day, they toil by night,
Stay not for weariness or storm,
And from their vital being draw
The filmy threads their web that form,

They cast it wide from spray to spray,
On spoil intent, to wisdom blind,
And sacrifice for glittering store
The welfare of the immortal mind.

But sudden, as a touch destroys
The spider's web, enwrought with care,
And leaves its tapestry to float
In shapeless tatters on the air,

So shall their hope, who build on earth,
And fear not God, like visions fly
When fortune waves her fickle wand
Or death each work of man shall try.

Oh grant us grace, our God and King,
Not on the spider's web to trust,
But rear the columns of our faith
Above this realm of change and dust.

JUNE XXIII.

"They thirsted not, when he led them through the desert."

ISAIAH, xlvi: 21.

WHEN wandering long, 'mid lone and parching sands
 The tribes of Israel took their exil'd way,
 Whence found they water for their numerous bands,
 Their thirst to slake, their fainting life to stay?

For them *He* clave the rock, He burst the cloud,
 Bade guards of angels shield their peril'd lot,
 Even though to other gods the knee they bow'd,
 And oft their debt of gratitude forgot.

There are, who on this pilgrimage of time
 Where arid wastes in long succession lie,
 Keep ever in their souls the silver chime
 Of a fresh fountain's gushing melody:

That fountain is of God, it can not fail,
 But cheers their heavenward course, through all life's
 desert vale.

JUNE XXIV.

"Until the day break, and the shadows flee away."

SONG OF SOLOMON, iv: 6.

WE have laid thee down, our darling, on pillow dark and
 cold,
 And Winter in his frosty shroud thy cherish'd form must
 fold,

But Spring shall haste with fairy foot the broken turf to tread
And bid her earliest violets weave their broidery round thy bed,
Glad Summer shall remember thee with all her wealth of bloom,
And Autumn strew his berries red around thy vine-clad tomb,
So here, while Nature's richest gifts adorn thy burial clay,
Wait, dearest, till the day shall break and the shadows flee away.

'Tis lonely here, my precious one, tho' many dwell around,
In costly cells of marble white, or cloistered neath the ground,
Yet none unseal the stony eye, none heave the rigid breast,
Or stretch the icy hand to greet the coming of a guest;
But the archangel's trumpet-cry shall raise that slumbering throng,
And from their beds the saints arise, to swell salvation's song,
So, in the firm and glorious hope of that rejoicing day,
Rest peaceful, till the morn shall break and the shadows flee away.

JUNE XXV.

"Loving favor, rather than silver and gold."

PROVERBS, xxii: 1.

TAKE back your gold, and give me love,
 The earnest smile,
 The heart-voice that can conquer pain,
 And care beguile.

Take back your silver, whence it came,
 It leads to strife;
 A woman's nature feeds on love,
 Love is its life.

Take back your silver, and your gold,
 Their gain is loss;
 But bring me love, for love is heaven,
 And they are dross.

JUNE XXVI.

"The emptiers have emptied them out, and marred their vine-branches."

NAHUM, ii: 2.

A CHILD was wildly weeping
 While rosy morning sped,
 She came to feed her cherished bird,
 That cherished bird was dead.

Yes, there it lay recumbent,
Shut eye and open beak,
In vain she smoothed its ruffled plumes,
And pressed them to her cheek.

Alas, poor sobbing mourner,
Slight cause to us it seems
For such a whelming grief to flow
In agonizing streams,

Yet as we journey onward,
With added strength to bear
The withering of the gourds that cheer
Our pilgrimage of care,

Oft from our walls suspended,
And bathed in sorrow's tide,
Is counted many an empty cage
Where our hearts' birdlings died.

JUNE XXVII.

"The Lord weigheth the spirits."

PROVERBS, xvi: 2.

MAN weigheth gold,—each fragment slight,
Each atom of its glittering dust,
He, in the well-pois'd balance lays,
And marks with unforgetful trust.

Man weigheth words,—the fleeting breath
 That's coin'd within this mortal frame,
 May waken anger unto death,
 Or kindle love's exulting flame.

God weigheth spirits. Oh! beware,
 Ye who in guile your sins enshroud,
 There is a Hand ye can not scape,
 A sun-ray rends the thickest cloud;

And when thy gold the rust shall eat,
 Thy tongue be silent in the tomb,
 The motives of the secret soul
 Give verdict in the day of doom.

JUNE XXVIII.

"The root of the righteous shall not be moved."

PROVERBS, xii: 3.

A TEMPEST 'mid the grove!
 Wild are the sounds of woe,
 The kingly tree that tower'd so long,
 Is crush'd amid the noteless throng,
 The crown of power lies low.

Out bursts the raging flame!
 In whirling eddies toss'd,
 From costly roof to roof it springs,
 Destruction on its reddening wings,
 The pride of wealth is lost.

Wide o'er the sea of time
 Floats on the blast of fame,
 In dust, the shatter'd column shines,
 And lo! the pyramid declines
 To tell its founder's name.

There's peril in the earth,
 There's peril on the wave,
 But he, who hath his root in truth,
 And heavenward turns thro' age and youth,
 A God of truth shall save.

JUNE XXIX.

"Tears are on her cheeks."

LAMENTATIONS, i: 2.

WHEN infant innocence is grieved,
 And hath not power to say,
 In words, the import of its pain,
 What giveth utterance way?

When tides of unexpected joy
 Like mountain billows came,
 What tells the rapture of the heart,
 Though speech itself is dumb?

When pent within a secret cell
 The agony of grief,
 Upheaving, threatens the springs of life,
 What lends the soul relief?

When Folly to Contrition turns
 And seeks a Saviour's love,
 What flows in crystal from the eye,
 Awakening lyres above?

'Twas Mercy's Angel gave the boon
 To pilgrim wanderers here,
 And when she shed it o'er their brow
 Call'd the pure gem,—*a tear.*

JUNE XXX.

"This is the rest, wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest, and this is the refreshing."

ISAIAH, xxviii: 12.

WHERE is the rest, my Lord?
 Where the refreshing, in this wilderness?
 Toils press, cares cluster, disappointments vex,
 Tried Friendship cheats our trust, Love fleets away,
 Cold or forgetful, and pale Memory strives
 To hide her tear-wet scroll.

Famish'd and faint,
 Apples of Sodom mock our eager taste,
 The parching sands are hot beneath our feet,
 The fountains fail,

Where is the rest, my Lord?

Then answer'd He who sigh'd at Nazareth,
 Stretching his pierced hands,—“Come unto me,
 And I will give you rest.”

July.

JULY I.

"The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

MARK, i: 1.

Good news to all, of every clime,
Good news of wealth untold,
Of gems Golconda's mine that shame,
The diamond and the ruby's flame,
The crystal and the gold.

Good news! Glad tidings! so the strain
In Heaven's own descant ran
When angel throngs announced His birth,
Who brought the Gospel down to earth
A gift to fallen man.

Lo! its beginning is with life
That in the cradle lies,
With the baptismal dew that falls,
With the sweet Mother, when she calls
Her nursling to the skies.

Its alphabet is holy fear,
Pure love, without alloy,
Its finished lore is at His feet,
Where all his true disciples meet
To share their Master's joy.

JULY II.

"The damsel is not dead."

MARK, v: 39.

THERE'S mourning 'neath the Ruler's dome,
His little daughter dies,
Twelve years the sunbeam of his home,
Shrouded, and cold she lies,

In her white hand a broken bud,
Her brow, bright tresses veil,
While o'er her snowy couch is strew'd
Judea's lily pale.

Who entereth where the weepers moan,
With such a godlike tread?
Who uttereth in that wondrous tone,
"The damsel is not dead?"

Not dead! Even in that house of woe
Contemptuous doubt is born,
And hissing laughter eddies low,
In pharisaic scorn.

"Talitha cumi!"—up she rose,
To Christ, her hand she gives,
On her pure cheek, rich crimson glows,
Ruler! thy daughter lives.

'There is no death, O Saviour dear!
To those who trust Thy name,
Only a passport to that sphere
From whence Thy glories came;

'Tis true, they vanish from our sight,
They yield this mortal breath,
And find among the sons of light,
Transition, but not death.

JULY III.

"Who giveth food to all flesh: for His mercy endureth forever."

PSALMS, CXXXVI: 25.

God giveth to the helpless babe,
The Mother's nurturing care,
And still the man in strength unbow'd,
The warrior stern, the Monarch proud,
To Him, for food repair.

The Camel, on the desert sands,
The herd, to pastures led,
The Lion, roaming o'er the wold,
The Lamb, that strayeth from the fold,
Are by His bounty fed.

The wandering denizens of air,
The Raven's clamorous brood,
The Eagle, high in wind-rock'd bower,
The moping Owl, in ruin'd tower,
From Him receive their food.

The Whale, that like an island spreads
Amid the seething main,
And all the nameless tribes that keep
Their mystic chambers in the deep
Seek not to Him in vain.

The insects on their gauzy wing,
The Ephemeron in its lot,
The Beetle on its droning course,
The Cricket, with its chirpings hoarse,
Are not by Him forgot.

Yea, even the groveling reptile race
That crawl to secret lair,
In Nature's ample storehouse find
A sustenance for them design'd,
By His unslumbering care.

Throughout this wide and teeming earth,
In mountain, vale, or grove,
Thro' ocean-depths, 'neath forest-shade,
He feedeth all His hand hath made,
How boundless is His love.

JULY IV.

"A Land which the Lord thy God careth for."

DEUTERONOMY, xi: 12.

OH beautiful and glorious! Thou dost wrap
The robe of liberty around thy breast,
And as a matron watch thy little ones
Who from their cradle seek the village school,
Bearing the baptism on their infant brow
Of christian faith, and knowledge, like the bud
That at the bursting of its sheath, inhales
Heaven's dew, and thither turns.

There is thy strength,
 In thy young children and in those who lead
 Their souls to righteousness. The mother's prayer,
 With her sweet lisper ere it goes to rest,
 The faithful teacher 'mid a plastic group,
 The classic halls, the hamlet's slender spire.
 From whence, as from the solemn, gothic fane
 That crowns the city's pomp, ascendeth sweet
 Jehovah's praise,—these are thy strength, my Land!
 These thy true glory.

JULY V.

“Open thine hand wide, unto thy poor brother.”

DEUTERONOMY, xv: 11.

OH red-brow'd Brother! mark'd by woe,
 Still roaming with the hunter-bow
 Thy little ones to feed,
 In prairie wide, or forest bare
 We pitying mark thy lot of care,
 And gifts with willing hand would bear
 To help thine hour of need:

We see thee launch thy bark canoe,
 O'er streams that first thy father's knew,
 Of old, the rulers here,
 But mournful is thy downcast eye,
 Oh, red-brow'd brother look on high,
 And through the clouds that veil thy sky,
 Turn to our Saviour dear.

JULY VI.

"To every thing there is a season."

ECCLESIASTES, iii: 1.

I SAW a rosy maiden,
At dawn of vernal day,
Who sang "how beautiful is life!"
And so she went her way.

I saw a thoughtful matron,
Her children round her knee,
"This life of tender care is sweet,"
She meekly said to me.

I saw an aged woman,
Her hair was silvery white,
"I see a better life than this,"
And vanished from our sight.

The maid, the mother, and the eld,
Though all unlike to see,
Were the same pilgrim, pressing on
To reach Eternity:

And in her secret heart was hid
A germ of holy love,
That gave to every passing hour
A beauty from above.

JULY VII.

"Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

PROVERBS, xxvii: 1.

LIVE *well to-day*, a spirit cries
To-day be just, *to-day* be wise;
Does any loitering idler tell
Another day will do as well?

"Now is the time, the accepted time,"
Speaks audibly a page sublime,
Another creed is heard to say
Wait till a more convenient day.

Ask of the Roman, pale with fear
While judgment thundered in his ear
Who to the warning voice would say
"I'll hear thee on a future day,"
Ask him if time confirmed the claim
Or that good season ever came.

Ask of the stream, or torrent hoarse,
To linger in their wonted course,
Ask of the bird to stay its flight,
Bid the pale moon prolong the night,
And listen to their answering tone
A future day is not our own.

And is it thine? Repel the cheat,
Resist the smooth, the dire deceit,
Lest while thou dreamst of long delay
Thine hour of action pass away,
Thy prospects fade, thy joys be o'er,
Thy time of hope return no more.

JULY VIII.

"Corban."

MARK, vii: 11.

A GIFT unto thy God!
A *gift!*—what shall it be?
What canst thou render to the Power
Who giveth all to thee?

Yield Him thy hands, to work
With zeal and patience meek,
Thy feet, to walk His righteous ways,
Thy tongue, His words to speak,

Thy wealth, His cause to aid,
Thy friends, when He shall call,
Thy will, to be transform'd to His,
Thy heart, thy soul, thine all.

Offer without delay
Whate'er thou hast to bring,
So soon thyself to pass away
On time's returnless wing;

For these brief gifts of thine,
This life that fleets away,
With an eternity of bliss
He can at last repay.

JULY IX.

"He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus, and laid it in his own new tomb."

MATTHEW, xxvii: 58, 60.

HE slept within another's tomb,
He, whom astonished angels saw
From Heaven's high majesty descend,
And bow to take a mortal law.

Another's tomb! Oh restless Pride,
That on through life man's heart doth stir,
Canst thou no humbling lesson learn
At Joseph's rock-hewn sepulcher?

For what avails thy restless search,
Thy watchful care from sun to sun,
Thy pomp of epitaph and arch,
Save but to see thyself outdone?

Turn where the Turk his cypress rears,
To Père la Chaise, with garlands strown,
And each Necropolis shall boast
Some monument to shame thine own,

Some column of a loftier heighth,
Some architrave of bolder art,
Some sculptur'd form of living grace,
To speak more strongly to the heart.

Man bargaineth for so much bronze,
For so much marble o'er his head,
Regardless of the deeds that keep
His memory from oblivion's dead,

What if his noteless clay should rest
 Unchronicled in stranger-ground,
 Or 'neath the heavy ocean sleep
 Till the last Angel's trump shall sound?

Let atom unto atom fleet,
 On blast, or stream, or riven sod,
 The record of the life alone
 Hath power or permanence with God.

So render back thy dust to dust,
 Ashes to ashes, dew'd with prayer;
 Restore each element its part,
 The earth, the water, and the air;

To each its own. The soul to God!
 Be wise for that which can not die,
 And by a stainless life engrave
 Fit tablet for Eternity.

JULY X.

"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet."

PSALMS, cxix: 105.

THE story of the sky
 The story of the earth
 The story of the wondrous soul
 And its immortal birth,

The story of His love
 Who to redeem it came,
 The story of His lowly life
 His cross of pain and shame,

And of the conquered Grave,
 The Spoiler's broken sting,
 The saints that with the angel-host
 The song of glory sing,

The story of the way
 That leads to worlds on high,
 Is in this Holy Book of God,
 Oh! guide me till I die.

JULY XI.

"I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

2ND SAMUEL, xii: 23.

THE beautiful, the gone-before!
 Whose infancy of love
 Came like a messenger from God,
 To lead our thoughts above;
 Whose tiny hand made burdens light,
 Whose smile extinguished care,
 The pressure of whose velvet lip
 Made rayless midnight fair.

The beautiful, the gone-before!
 Who woke love's deathless flame,
 The echo of whose step could make
 All other music tame;

Upon whose youthful arm we lean'd,
 (Forgive us, Lord,) with pride,
 Into whose eye we look'd for joy,
 Though all were dark beside.

The gone-before, the beautiful!
 We must not wildly sigh,
 Even though the life-blood of the soul
 Is oozing through the eye,
 But take heaven's discipline in love,
 And meekly bow the head,
 Though heart and hearth-stone both are lone,
 And earthly hope be dead.

The gone-before, the beautiful!
 List! List! their words we hear;
 "Waste not your time for us to mourn,
 Whose meeting is so near,
 Even now, the rustling of our wings,
 Doth swell the zephyr's voice,
 Upon our glittering robes ye tread,
 Look upward and rejoice."

JULY XII.

"Rob not the poor."

PROVERBS, xxii: 22.

OF the fullness of thy hoard,
 Of the surplus of thy board,
 Of the garments warm and fair
 Which the fretting moth might tear,

More than these, of alms that be
Self-denial unto thee,
Rob not the poor.

Of the sympathies, whose power
Gird the soul in sorrow's hour,
Arm with energy to bear
Pallid sickness, pining care,
Such as lift the downcast eye,
Such as gold can never buy,
Rob not the poor.

Of those kindly words that cheer
Sinking heart, or deafen'd ear,
Of the radiant smiles that throw
Sunlight o'er the path of woe,
Thou, whose feet would faithful tread
Where the pitying Saviour led,
Rob not the poor.

JULY XIII.

"And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads."
ISAIAH, XXXV: 10.

THERE is a joy that lights the eye
When beauty, youth, and strength are past,
When all our earthly pleasures fly,
Like leaves before the wintry blast.

There is a joy that checks the throng
 Of rankling care, and sorrow's shock,
 That strikes its anchor deep and strong
 In Heaven's imperishable rock.

Grant me this joy, and when my soul
 Her farewell to the world shall sigh,
 Though unknown seas beneath me roll,
 And lift their deathful billows high,

Then when my frail and fainting sight
 To this receding world is dim,
 The luster of my Saviour's light
 Shall brightly mark my way to Him.

JULY XIV.

"And every man went unto his own house."

JOHN, vii: 53.

THE king unto his palace proud
 Returneth from the throne,
 The noble to his castle hoar,
 The peasant to his cottage door,
 The monk to cloister lone.

The soldier hasteth to his camp,
 The sailor dares the deeps,
 The traveler spreads his tent at night
 That flecks the forest green with white,
 And 'neath its shelter sleeps.

The Greenland hunter scoops a cell
 Beneath incumbent snows,
The son of Afric to his kraal,
The Indian to his wigwam frail
 With cane-like roof-tree goes.

The eagle knows his eyried cliff,
 The lion loves his lair,
The beaver builds his lodge of rest,
Foxes have holes, and birds their nest,
 Where dwell the houseless? Where?

There is a mansion free to all,
 Whence none are turned away,
Even those who ne'er had home before,
Are welcome through its unlock'd door
 To enter in, and stay.

No fee of gold the lodgers pay,
 In that sequester'd bower;
But "dust to dust," on forehead white,
Doth give each applicant the right
 Of mastership and power.

No gorgeous robes the inmates wear,
 No paintings deck the wall,
It hath no revelry by night,
No casement fair with taper'd light,
No downy couch, or hearth-stone bright,
 Yet, 'tis the home for all.

JULY XV.

"Speak not evil."

JAMES, iv : 11.

SPEAK well of all: 'twill be a medicine
Unto thine own frail heart.

Think well of all:

Nor let thy friendship at the foibles start
That appertain to our humanity.

True Love hath in itself the principle
Of patience unto death.

Be pitiful

Unto the fallen, nor bid the scourging tongue
Lay bare thy neighbor's faults, that shrinking bide
In secrecy,—perchance, with penitence.

Speak lenient words, and soften righteous blame:
So, on thy soul shall dwell no slander-spot
When it goes forth to judgment.

JULY XVI.

"So Tibni died, and Omri reigned."

1ST KINGS, xvi : 22.

THE high-toned boy rebell'd at rule,
And wildly wish'd at home and school
For that good time, so grand and free,
When he should his own master be.

The years roll'd on, he struck his tent,
And forth to seek his fortune went;
But piercing thorns his way enclos'd,
And iron tasks the world imposed,
With tireless toil his sinews tried,
And oft the just reward denied,
Till he in bitterness exclaimed,
Though *Tibni died*, yet *Omri reign'd*.

By pleasure's wiles the youth was led,
And health declined, and honor fled,
Till in the frenzy of despair,
He rose and broke the syren's snare.
But next, with nature sear'd and cold,
His manhood bow'd to lust of gold,
While sleepless care and fraudulent art
Wore out in spots the wearied heart,
Still trampling down with madness blind
All generous feeling for his kind;
At each career was Conscience pain'd,
If *Tibni died*, or *Omri reign'd*.

So when we quell with contrite woe
Some sin that kept our spirits low,
Permit us not, Oh God of grace,
To take another in its place,
And, changing but the idol's name,
Still yield to vanity and shame,
Even like the land that swept away
In fields of blood, a tyrant's sway,
Yet took, by maddening folly led,
Another despot in his stead,
Nor wisdom from its sorrows gain'd
For *Tibni died*, but *Omri reign'd*.

JULY XVII.

"All the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them."

MATTHEW, iv : 8.

WHAT was that glory? smoke and flame,
A meteor lost in air,
Dark pyramids, without a name,
Old thrones without an heir,

The echo of a warring host,
A nation's triumph-cry,
Through the long corridors of time
Lost, like an infant's sigh,

Proud tombs, whose undecypher'd scroll
No hoary legend kept,
Are these the kingdoms of the earth,
O'er which Ambition wept?

But He, who spread their specious wile
Before the pure in heart,
Promis'd what was not his to give,
With base deceiver's art;

And should he linger near us still,
For who may dare to say,
How strong he is, how frail are we,
Poor habitants of clay,

Yes, should he test us one by one,
Here, in our household sphere,
As erst for forty days and nights,
He tried our Master dear,

Oh, Tempter, hence! from mountain high,
From fair, forbidden tree,
And from the temple's pinnacle,
Go hence, and leave us free.

JULY XVIII.

"In the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up."

PSALMS, v: 3.

BEFORE the portal of the east
Its golden glory takes,
Before the voice of slumbering man
Its varied echo makes,

Before the lily of the field
Unseals its cradled eye
Before the pinions of the lark
Unfold in melody,

My heart awaking, turns to Him
In whom is all her trust,
Who breath'd this mystic power of thought
Into a frame of dust:

Oh! at this sweetly sacred hour,
From earth's intrusion free,
Smile, Lord! upon the waiting soul
And draw her near to Thee.

JULY XIX.

"An angel went down, at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the waters."

JOHN, v: 4.

FULL flow'd Bethesda's mantling pool,
While forth from hall and bower,
Throng'd the sad trains of wan disease,
To test its healing power;

Yet wrapp'd in deep repose it lay,
Tho' many an earnest eye
For its first infant ripple watch'd
With pain's impatient sigh.

What moves it? Man of science, say!
When not a zephyr strays;
Astrologer! what planet meets
Thy searching, skeptic gaze?

The Angel of the Waters, see!
Enrobed in might and love,
Who o'er Bethesda's bosom bids
The healing spirit move.

Oh! if the fever of the soul,
The palsy of the brain,
Should smite us, Father! till we find
All earthly helpers vain,

Send forth thy Gospel's blessed stream,
That holy health can give,
And bid thine Angel stir the wave,
That we may bathe and live.

JULY XX.

"As a child that is weaned."

PSALMS, CXXXI: 2.

I HAVE had delight in toys,
Childish pastimes, youthful joys,
Chasing meteors o'er the lea
Seeking pearls in pleasure's sea,
Dancing when the harp-strings thrill'd,
Singing as a glad heart will'd,
Building castles in the air,
Grasping love, and finding care,
Hoarding treasures here and there
Treasures pleasant to the sight,
Flowers and fruits, and jewels bright.

What are they? or what am I,
That I should repine or sigh,
If God take them all away?
What am I, or what are they?
Fleeting bubbles, fragile clay.

Weaned babe, on mother's knee,
Can'st not thou, our teacher be?
Saying, in thy meek repose
Though thy lips no language knows,
Soul-subdued, with smile benign,
"Not my will be done, but thine."

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JULY XXI.

“In the world, ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer.”

JOHN, xvi: 33.

MUST there be shade-spots in our pilgrimage?
 Our Father wills it so. The piercing thorn
 Lurks in the rose-cups which we cull and wear
 Next to our heart. What matters it? The pang,
 The cloud are transient; but the hope that springs
 From their stern ministry, the faith that looks
 O'er these dim skies, gives treasures that the world
 Can never take away. Our Saviour knew
 Its whole of tribulation. Said he not
 That in the meekness of the heaven-arm'd breast,
 Was power to overcome?

The shallow rills
 Fed by the dew-drops of terrestrial good
 Must shrink and vanish. Thou thyself dost fleet
 As the light shadow. Other hands shall pluck
 Thy cherish'd flowrets, and a race unknown
 Reap the ripe fruits of all thy sleepless toil,
 And thank thee not. Another, at thy board
 Shall be installed, and by thy winter hearth
 A stranger sit, while thou no more shalt claim
 Note or remembrance. Shall this mushroom life
 Wake tears of bitterness?

Go ask of God
To shield thy heart, even as the stripling youth,
Who, with the simplest weapons of the brook,
The vaunting giant slew. Be thy step firm,
And thy demeanor like some angel guest,
Patient of earth, yet for high heaven prepar'd.

JULY XXII.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."
2ND CORINTHIANS, iv: 17.

THERE'S mourning 'mid the boughs,
High in the forest fair,
The widow'd linnet wails her spouse,
Caught in the fowler's snare,
While the forsaken nest
Laments with shriller woe,
The mother robin's brooding breast
Pierced by the archer's bow.

There's mourning in the floods,
For what the barbed hook,
And the wide-spread, un pitying net,
In tyrant anger took,
And for the dire harpoon
Which the vex'd wave doth stain,
And in strong agony transfix
The monarch of the main.

There's mourning in the field,
The grass that fell to-day,
Reluctant to the scythe did yield
Its fragrant soul away,
But the reaper in his path,
How little doth he heed
The expiring of the wounded swathe,
That at his feet doth bleed.

The maiden as she goes
Among the flowers at morn
Recks not the weeping of the rose
That from its buds is torn;
There's mourning all around,
In ocean, earth, and air,
The seeds of sorrow sow the ground,
And blossom every where.

Shall man revolt to bear
The tax that nature lays?
Or with a murmuring spirit share
The ills that cloud his days?
When he, alone, of all
Creation's mourning train
Hath hope these fleeting ills may work
His everlasting gain?

JULY XXIII.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

REVELATION, xiv: 13.

WE go the way their steps have trod,
 From love's forsaken bowers,
 Their simple shroud, their narrow house,
 Their lowly bed are ours,
 But in those mansions of the soul
 Where tear was never shed,
 Doubt not there yet is room for us,
 For so the Saviour said.

Oh could we cheerfully to God
 Yield back the friends He gave,
 Or with such tear as Jesus shed
 Bedew their peaceful grave,
 How pure from the Refiner's Hand
 The spirit's gold would rise,
 And Faith from transient sorrow gain
 New fitness for the skies.

JULY XXIV.

"Now is the accepted time."

2ND CORINTHIANS, vi: 2.

"Now," is the voice that Nature breathes
 To those her lore who heed,
 The changeful cloud, the fleeting beam,
 The fading rose, the unresting stream,
 Confirm her warning creed.

“*Now*,” is the word that Wisdom writes
 On palace, hall, and bower ;
 The buried past from hope is free,
 The future,—what is that to thee ?
 Improve the present hour.

“*Now*,” saith the Spirit from on high,
 “*Now*,” saith a Page sublime,
 To-morrow hath its load of cares,
 To-morrow’s hand no promise bears
 Of the accepted time.

“*Now*,” though another morn may rise
 In purple and in gold,
 Thine eye made dim by failing breath,
 And shrouded in the dust of death,
 May not its light behold.

“*Now*,”—not to-morrow,—oh, my soul,
 Obey thy Maker’s call
 Lest darkly on the scroll of fate
 Stand forth the fearful doom,—*too late*,
 And thou be reft of all.

JULY XXV.

“God requireth that which is past.”

ECCLESIASTES, iii: 15.

THE Past! It answereth not our call,
 Its shadowy reign is o’er,
 See! like a folded mist it hangs
 O’er dim oblivion’s shore:

The dream of childhood's distant day,
 Light words from youth that fell,
 The deeds and thoughts of riper years,
 Who can their number tell?

The *Present*, like an eagle's wing
 Doth from our vision fleet,
 The *Future*, with its shadowy form
 Our grasp may never meet,
 But with the great, mysterious *Past*
 Portentous records are,
 Oh! spread thy conscience to thy Judge,
 In penitence and prayer.

JULY XXVI.

"Behold, He taketh away, who can hinder Him?"

JOB, ix: 12.

OH Lord, in singleness of trust
 Unto thy feet I flee,
 Behold my helpers all are dust,
 May I not cling to Thee?

The love that in my bosom grew
 And with my being twined,
 Now, like a thistle meets the view
 And wounds my shrinking mind.

The joy that in my heart was stored
 And kept my pathway bright,
 With blighted leaf like Jonah's gourd
 Hath perished in a night.

All these were loans, and surely thou
 Wilt never do me wrong,
 And should not I submissive bow
 Who had their use so long?

And consecrate the unbidden tear
 That from my eyelid strays,
 And bid it in its fountain-sphere,
 Bear tribute to thy praise?

JULY XXVII.

“It is I: be not afraid.”

JOHN, vi: 20.

FRIEND, in every woe and care,
 Hearer of that inmost prayer,
 Which at dawn of morning gray,
 Ere the shadows fleet away,
 All unclothed by language steals,
 And before Thy footstool kneels,
 Friend Eternal, Friend Divine,
 Be our warmest praises Thine.

O'er this world's tempestuous tide,
 Be our pole-star and our guide,
 Though the surges wild and dark
 Thundering threat the lonely bark,
 Tho' the tempest wake in dread,
 Tho' the wrecks are round us spread,
 Let Thy promise be our aid,
 “It is I: be not afraid.”

When this clay with shuddering start
 From the soul is call'd to part,
 Yield the quickening breath of God,
 And become a lifeless clod,
 Let Thine arm of strength be near,
 Let Thy voice the conflict cheer,
 Thro' the darkened valley's shade,
 "It is I: be not afraid."

JULY XXVIII.

"Unspotted from the world."

JAMES, i: 27.

UNSPOTTED though the clouds
 Oft o'er our landscape spread
 And on the sparkling and the bright
 An inky shadow shed;

Unspotted where the touch
 Of many a hand defiles,
 And where the foul and frequent snare
 The unwary foot beguiles;

Unspotted, through the faith
 With holy fervor fraught,
 That daily in the fount of prayer
 Doth cleanse both deed and thought:

So, grant us strength, dear Lord,
 Despite the Tempter's art,
 Unspotted from the world, to rise,
 Amid the pure in heart.

JULY XXIX.

“The spirit, indeed, is willing,—but the flesh is weak.”

MATTHEW, xxvi: 41.

FLESH is not weak, when pleasure calls,
 When appetite asserts its right,
 Gay through the mazy dance it treads,
 The viol strikes, the banquet spreads,
 Nor flags while turning day to night.

Flesh is not weak, when Passion moves,
 When Love or Anger fire the eye,
 When toward the goal Ambition springs,
 When War unfurls his banner'd wings,
 And trumpets shriek the battle-cry.

When is it weak? When Duty points
 To self-denial's humbling task,
 When Folly weaves the syren-song,
 When Wisdom makes the sermon long,
 Or for its gold, the needy ask;

When is it weak? When round its path
 A snare of sin the Tempter wreaths,
 It tampers, when it ought to cry
 “*Get thee behind me,*”—and the sigh
 Of base capitulation breathes.

Up, willing spirit! Rule the flesh,
 Make the weak servant heed thee well,
 Watch with thy Lord, thro' sorrow's hour,
 So shalt thou by His quickening power
 Together rise with Him to dwell.

JULY XXX.

"I have called and ye refused,—I have stretched out my hand and no man regarded."

PROVERBS, i: 24.

To gain the friendship of the world,
How vain the ceaseless strife;
We sow the sand, we grasp the wind,
We waste the life of life.

Perchance some giddy height we gain,
Some gilded treasure show,
The footing fails, the shadow 'scapes,
We sink in deeper woe.

Yet, baffled, still the toil we try,
The eager chase renew,
Even though the portals of the grave
Yawn on our startled view.

But Thou, whose pitying mercy's tide
Is like the unfathom'd sea,
Thy love was waiting for our souls,
That would not turn to Thee;

Thy hand was stretch'd, Thy voice was heard,
Thy fold was open wide,
Ah! who the straying sheep can save
That shuns its Shepherd-Guide.

JULY XXXI.

"Almost thou persuadest."

ACTS, xxvi: 28.

"ALMOST," thou Jewish prince! what words are these,
Almost persuaded?

Hadst thou but exchanged
Almost, for altogether,—cast away
Trappings and royal purple, for his chain
Who reason'd thus before thee, drawn his faith
Into thy soul, even with the blood-red spear
Of martyrdom, eternal were thy gain.

— Oh, Friends! who linger, tho' the still, small voice
Stirs in your dormant conscience, who would fain,
Like King Agrippa, be convinc'd, yet turn
Back to the world awhile, and give your sins
A little longer scope,—beware! beware!
Lest that dread *almost* shut you out of Heaven.

August.

AUGUST I.

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."

3RD JOHN, 4.

WHEN kneeling round a Saviour's board
Fair forms, and brows beloved I see,
Who once the paths of love explored
And scann'd the hallowed page with me,

When now, from each uplifted face
Beam tranquil trust, and peace benign,
And in each eye Heaven's hope I trace
The tear of joy suffuses mine.

Father! I bless thy ceaseless care
That now its richest gift hath shed,
Oh, guide their steps through every snare
From every danger shield their head;

From dangerous error's dire control,
From pride, from change, from darkness free
Preserve each timorous, trusting soul
That like the Ark-Dove turns to Thee.

Unite us, where no ill can harm,
Unite us, where no fate can sever,
Where naught but holiness doth charm,
And all that charms shall live forever.

AUGUST II.

"The brook of the willows."

ISAIAH, xv: 7.

WITH a pleasant, murmuring noise
 Glides the brooklet of our joys,
 Sparkling in the sunbeam sheen,
 Fring'd with flowers and fleck'd with green;
 Yet its beauteous banks along
 Here and there, with fibers strong,
 Still the tree of weeping droopeth,
 And to kiss its waters stoopeth.

Liberal Spring the current swells,
 Brimming o'er in crystal wells,
 Sultry Summer checks its flow,—
 Brooks decrease, but willows grow.

AUGUST III.

"Jesus saith unto her, *Mary!*"

JOHN, xx: 16.

WHAT was the name, that first of all,
 My blessed Saviour spoke,
 When rising from the realm of death
 The tyrant's sway he broke?
 Oh! sweetest of all earthly names
Mary! methinks I hear,
 In the pure baptism of His voice,
 That cadence meet my ear.

And unto whom did He at first
 Announce His power to save,
 That resurrection which made sure
 Our conquest o'er the grave?
 To the disciples fed so long
 On heavenly manna free?
 To Roman guard? To haughty scribe?
 To boastful Pharisee?

No, to the lowly hearts that watch'd
 Tho' every star had paled,
 To woman's love that stood the test
 When loftier manhood fail'd:
 Oh, Sex deem'd weak! be well-content,
 Nor strive for futile fame,
 Thus honor'd by the Son of God,
 No higher glory claim.

AUGUST IV.

"Behold! there went out a sower to sow."

MARK, iv: 3.

WILT sow your heart-seeds here?
 Earth hath too poor a soil,
 Her roaming, wayside birds of prey
 Oft snatch the quicken'd germs away,
 And disappoint your toil.

Even should they spring to birth,
 Perchance, with ruthless haste,
 The summer-drought might parch their bloom,
 Or early frost their buds entomb,
 Or worms their life-blood waste.

But there's a cloudless clime,
 Beneath whose genial skies
 No blight the florist's trust betrays,
 No garner'd fruitage e'er decays,
 No plant of promise dies;

It hath no piercing thorn,
 It hath no poisonous snare,
 No storms the harvest-hopes destroy
 Or choke with sobs the reaper's joy,
 Sow ye your heart-seeds there.

AUGUST V.

"He shall enter into peace, they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness."

ISAIAH, lvii: 2.

THE laboring man who toils
 Unmoved by cold or heat,
 Doth wearied seek his nightly couch
 And find its slumber sweet,

While they, whom idle years
 Of luxury impair,
 Toss on the reckless couch, or meet
 The dream of terror there.

The rich man moves in pomp,
To him the world is dear,
And every treasure twists a tie,
To bind him stronger here:

But he whose purest gold
Is in the conscience stored,
Is richer at the hour of death,
Than with the miser's hoard.

When this short day of life,
With all its work is done,
The faithful servant of his God
Doth hail the setting sun;

But they who waste their breath,
Dread the accusing tomb,
And the time-killer flies from death,
As from a murderer's doom.

So give us, Lord, to find,
When earth shall pass away,
That Sabbath-evening of the mind,
Which crowns a well-spent day,

That entering to thy rest,
Where toils and cares are o'er,
We, with the myriads of the bless'd,
May praise Thee evermore.

AUGUST VI.

“Oh Thou that hearest prayer.”

PSALMS, lxxv: 2.

OH Thou, that hearest prayer!
 Upon Thy love and care
 My soul relies,
 What rock hath she beside,
 If sorrows roll their tide?
 What refuge where to hide,
 When storms arise?

Oh Thou, that hearest prayer!
 Grant me life's ills to bear,
 Patient in trust,
 Grant me Thy truth to see,
 Grant me Thy Spirit free,
 Till my last sleep shall be
 Low in the dust.

AUGUST VII.

“Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”

1ST CORINTHIANS, iii: 11

BUILD'ST thou on wealth? its wings are ever spread
 Its dazzled votaries to elude and foil;
 On science? lo! the lofty sage hath fled,
 Like the pale lamp that lit his midnight toil,
 Forgotten as the flower that deck'd the vernal soil.

Build'st thou on love? the trusting heart it cheers
 While youth and hope entwine their garlands gay,
 Yet hath it still an heritage of tears:
 Build'st thou on fame? the dancing meteor's ray
 Glides not on swifter wing, to deeper night away.

Why, on such sands, thy spirit's temple rear?
 How shall its base the wrecking billows shun?
 Go, seek the Eternal Rock, with humble fear,
 And on the tablet of each setting sun
 Grave, with a diamond pen, some deed of duty done.

Young art thou? then the words of wisdom weigh,
 Mature? the gathering ills of life beware,
 Aged? O, make His mighty arm thy stay
 Who saves the weakest suppliant from despair,
 And bids the darken'd tomb a robe of glory wear.

AUGUST VIII.

"Yea, the stars are not pure in His sight."

JOB, xxv : 5.

WHY tremble thus, ye fixed stars?
 Ye who abide so near
 The Fountain of Unfailing Light,
 Say, what have ye to fear?

And the Stars answered, "We who dwell
 Nearest the Source of Day,
 Best know its purity, and dread
 To lose or shame its ray."

Oh, Father! while our star of life
 Holds on its wandering course,
 Permit no darkening mists of earth
 To shade its guiding source,

And when no more its twinkling orb
 Thro' weeping clouds shall peer,
 Grant it all uneclipsed to span
 The Everlasting Year.

AUGUST IX.

'Not dead,—but sleepeth.'

MARK, v: 39.

NOT *dead!* A marble seal is prest
 Where the bright glance did part,
 A weight is on the pulseless breast,
 Thick ice around the heart,
 No more she wakes with greeting smile,
 Glad voice and buoyant tread,
 But yet ye calmly say the while
 She *sleeps*, she is not *dead*.

No; No. The mind whose heaven-born thought
 No earthly chain could bind,
 The holy heart divinely fraught
 With love to all mankind,
 The humble soul whose changeless trust
 Was with its God on high,
 They soar above the sleeping dust,
 Their doom is not to die.

AUGUST X.

"The king said unto the damsel,—'Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee.'" MARK, vi: 22.

HEROD had sworn. The dancer had her way.
 Light heels, and lighter words.

What follow'd next?
 The prompting of a vengeful woman's spite.
 A lurid lamp within the dungeon-cell,
 An executioner, with visage grim,
 And as the whirlwind rends the lofty oak,
 Falls the beheaded prophet.

It would seem
 The king was sorry, but for his oath's sake,
 And from a craven fear of those who sate
 With him at meat, he would not say her nay.
 —False pride! mistaken honor!

Through their sway
 The might of wickedness was dominant,
 And malice triumphed.

Friend! if thou hast made
 A vow of rashness, go, absolve thyself,
 Beseech forgiveness, seek release of him
 Who holds the unwary promise.

Hear his voice,
 Israel's wise monarch, and decline to be
 Another's surety, lest thou plunge with him
 In ruin irretrievable.

'Twere sad,
 If the unbridling of a thoughtless tongue
 Should trouble and perplex our fellow-men,
 Uphold the wrong, sow discord, hide the truth,
 Or hurt the soul.

'Twere better to be taught
 Even by king Herod in his vanity
 Than compromise our peace, and sanction guilt,
 And suffer loss, for sound of empty words.

AUGUST XI.

"Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance,
 when it was weary." PSALMS, lxxviii: 9.

I MARKED at morn, the thirsty earth
 By lingering drought oppressed,
 Like sick man in his fever heat,
 With parching brow and breast,
 But evening brought a cheering sound
 Of music o'er the pane,
 The voice of heavenly showers, that said,—
 Oh! blessed, blessed Rain!

The pale and suffocating plants
That bowed themselves to die,
Imbibed the pure, relieving drops
Sweet gift of pitying sky,
The fern and heath upon the rock,
And the daisy on the plain,
Each whispered to their new-born buds,
Oh! blessed, blessed Rain!

The herds that o'er the wasted fields
Roamed with dejected eye,
To find their verdant pasture brown,
Their crystal brooklet dry,
Rejoiced within the mantling pool
To stand refreshed again,
Each infant ripple leaping high
To meet the blessed Rain.

The farmer sees his crisping corn
Whose tassels swept the ground,
Uplift once more a stately head
With hopeful beauty crowned,
While the idly lingering water-wheel,
Where the miller ground his grain,
Turns gaily round with a dashing sound,
At the touch of the blessed Rain.

Lord! if our drooping souls too long
Should close their upward wing,
And the adhesive dust of earth
All darkly round them cling,
Send thou such showers of quickening grace
That the angelic train
Shall to our grateful shout respond,
Oh! blessed, blessed Rain!

AUGUST XII.

"Considering thyself,—lest thou also be tempted."

GALLATIANS, vi: 1.

SCORN not the sinner, thou whose heart
 In purpose pure is garnered strong,
 Claims penitence with thee no part?
 Doth pride to mortal man belong?

By all thy follies unforgiven,
 Were thou at Death's dark hour accused,
 Even thou, might at the gate of Heaven
 In terror knock, and be refused.

AUGUST XIII.

"And David said, Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord, for his mercies are great,—
 and let me not fall into the hand of man."

2ND SAMUEL, xxiv: 14.

MAN hath a voice severe,
 His neighbor's faults to blame,
 A wakeful eye, a listening ear
 To note his brother's shame.

He with suspicion's glance
 The curtain'd breast doth read,
 And raise the accusing balance high,
 To weigh the doubtful deed.

Oh! Thou, whose sleepless eye
Doth note each secret path,
For mercy to Thy throne, we fly,
From man's condemning wrath.

Thou, who dost dimness mark
In Heaven's resplendent way,
And folly in that angel host
Who serve Thee night and day,

How fearless should our trust
In Thy compassion be,
When from our brother of the dust
We dare appeal to Thee.

AUGUST XIV.

"A friend loveth at all times."

PROVERBS, xvii: 17.

I SAW the youngling moon look meekly forth,
While the hoarse floods prolong'd their vesper hymn,
Touching the forehead of a far, gray isle
With silver radiance, delicately dim,

But arching high, in majesty and wrath,
And closer shutting o'er her gentle head,
Portending evil for her future path,
A sable cloud, its gathering blackness spread;

Yet still, adherent to the infant queen,
 Fast by her side, with cheek serenely pale,
 A tender, lonely, pure-eyed star was seen,
 Like Abdiel faithful, tho' all else should fail :

And hark ! that voice upon the summer air,—
Who hath one constant friend, the darkest cloud may dare.

AUGUST XV.

“ Unless thy law had been my delight, I should have perished in my affliction.”

PSALMS, cxix : 92.

HAD not thy righteous law been my delight
 When friends forsook, and earthly comforts fled,
 And cruel foes displayed their envious spite,
 Most surely I had sunk among the dead,
 And cold oblivion's dew had rested on my head.

Yet still I live, oh let my praise arise
 To Him, who clothed with majesty and might
 And seated in His temple of the skies
 Sends gifts to man, with peace and life and light,
 But thou my soul art weak, and sinful in His sight.

Oh ! lead me from those paths with error fraught,
 Whose snares, too oft, my heedless steps betide,
 Restrain the hasty speech and roving thought,
 And fear of feeble man, and causeless pride,
 And all the secret ills that in my heart abide.

AUGUST XVI.

"Thy will be done."

MATTHEW, vi: 10.

THE Mother trembled with excess of joy
 Over her first-born babe. The new delight
 Spread a fresh vernal greenness o'er her heart
 Remembering not her anguish, like the snows
 That on the winter's skirts had fled away.
 A few bright mornings dawn'd, and lo! a frost,
 And coldly by the fountain of her hope
 Lay a dead blossom.

Agony intense
 Convuls'd her woman's nature, to its depths.

But when at length 'mid chastening tears she spake,
 And said *Thy will be done*, there came a peace
 That the world's proudest plenitude gives not,
 And the afflicted soul found rest in God.

AUGUST XVII.

"And deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

HEBREWS, ii: 15.

AFRAID to die! afraid to sleep
 In earth, our mother's tranquil breast,
 Where snares and troubles vex no more,
 And all the weary are at rest?

Afraid to die! afraid to take
His hand who trod the shadowy vale,
And leads us on to pastures green,
And living streams that never fail?

Afraid to die! afraid to bear
The pang that but a moment tries,
And o'er the sway of pain and care,
Ascend to mansions in the skies?

Afraid to die! afraid to meet
The guardian bands who watchful wait,
And spread their radiant pinions wide
To bear us through salvation's gate?

Afraid to die! prefer to be
A stranger in these courts below,
A pilgrim, when the lights of home
Bright through our Father's windows glow?

Afraid to die! ah! what avails,
Whether by sickness, storm, or fire,
The ethereal essence finds its place,
And rises to the Eternal Sire.

Afraid to die! O grant us grace,
Thou who didst dare the spoiler's strife,
Calmly to meet his cold embrace,
And soar to everlasting life.

AUGUST XVIII.

"A standing pillar of salt, is the monument of an unbelieving soul."

WISDOM OF SOLOMON, x: 7.

IMPASSIVE and unfertile,
 A monument of pain,
 The mark of disobedience
 And obdurate disdain,
 A fixture in the desert
 Immoveable and dread,
 A warning to the living,
 A beacon 'mid the dead,
 A hankerer after Sodom
 Where fiery billows roll,
 Yet still unfit for Zoar,
 Is the unbelieving soul.

AUGUST XIX.

And He took them up in His arms, put His hands on them, and blessed them."

MARK, x: 16.

CHILDREN by our Lord were honored,
 When on this poor earth he staid;
 Fondly he embraced and blessed them,
 Though a frowning throng forbade.

To his side a child he summoned,
 Placed him in the midst, and told
 Those that simple guide to follow,
 Who God's kingdom would behold.

Still his Gospel honors children,
 Bids them in its armies move,
 And their little rills of bounty
 Swell the ocean of its love;

Bids them strive with zealous pity
 For the desolate and sad,
 Till the dark and desert places
 Are for them exceeding glad.

AUGUST XX.

“In the fourth watch of the night, Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.”

MATTHEW, xiv : 25

WHEN on a dangerous shore,
 Quicksands, and breakers roar,
 Who walks the billows o'er?
 List! “It is I.”

Though at the midnight dark,
 Storms toss thy lonely bark,
 What saith the Pilot?—Hark!
 ‘Be of good cheer.’”

Though earth and ocean quake,
 Though every prop should break,
 Though every friend forsake,
 “Be not afraid.”

Have not a thought of fear,
 Shed no repining tear,
 Christ unto Thee is near,
 Christ is thine all.

AUGUST XXI.

"To know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge."

EPHESIANS, iii: 19.

How can we know what passeth thought?
 How measure that which hath no end?
 How solve the mystery divine
 That angels fail to comprehend?

Yet, Saviour, though this wondrous love
 That bowed to bleed for fallen man,
 In all its magnitude and depth,
 Our futile reason fail to scan,

Still may we with this boundless theme
 Kneel, and in gratitude adore
 And taste salvation's living stream
 And thirst, and droop, and doubt no more.

AUGUST XXII.

"I do set my bow in the cloud."

GENESIS, ix: 13.

THE Sun drew near his setting, robed in gold,
 But on the Patriarch, ere from prayer he rose,
 A sudden cloud had wept, and rain-drops lay
 Amid his silver hairs. Then burst an arch
 Of glorious brilliance forth, spanning the skies,
 Heaven's amnesty to desolated earth.
 Oh Signet-ring! with which the Almighty seal'd
 His treaty with the remnant of the race
 That shrank before Him, let thy brilliant hues
 Grave on our souls His unforgettable love.

Sublime Instructor, who four thousand years
 Hast ne'er withheld thy lesson, but unfurl'd,
 When shower and sunbeam bade, thy radiant scroll,
 Oft 'mid the summer's day, I musing gaze
 Thro' my lone casement to be taught of thee.
 Born of the smile and tear-drop, hast thou not
 Affinity with man?—for such would seem
 His elements and pilgrimage below.
 Like thine, his span of strength and beauty fades,
 Although its columns rest on endless truth,
 And boundless mercy.

Deluge floods may come,
 The everlasting fountains burst their bounds,
 The exploring dove without a leaf return,
 And earth depart. *What then?*

Be still, my soul!
 Enter thine ark. God's promise can not fail,
 And surely, as yon rainbow gilds the cloud,
 His truth, thine Ararat, shall shelter thee.

AUGUST XXIII.

"Lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven."

MATTHEW, vi: 20.

I HAD a garment rare,
 A robe of cost;
 I hoarded it with care
 From sun and dust and air,
 Lo! the moth hath marr'd it sore,
 It charms the sight no more,
 'Tis lost! 'Tis lost!

I had a ring of price,
 A wedge of gold;
 But to their secret bed
 The cancerous rust hath sped,
 It hath made a fatal sweep,
 It hath eaten broad and deep,
 Look! Look! Behold!

I had a precious gem,
 A jewel rare;
 Close in my bosom's core
 That talisman I bore,
 How did the robber's eye
 My *life of life* espy?
 'Tis gone! 'Tis gone!

Alas! poor rifled heart,
 Burdened with care,
 List to the blessed word
 Of thine ascended Lord:
 Heaven hath a casket sure,
 Where treasures age endure,
 Lay thine up—*there!*

AUGUST XXIV.

"Beauty for ashes, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

ISAIAH, lxi: 3.

LORD of the bird, and the green leaf, that pour
 Their vernal matin forth, in bud, and song,
 Dost thou not claim from the frail, human heart
 The same fresh incense, oft withheld too long?

Dost thou not bid, when the wild storm is past,
 That it should yield to Thee, with tearful trust,
 Each cherish'd tendril smitten by the blast,
 Each riven blossom humbled to the dust?
 And firm in cheerful and confiding hope,
 Admit the wisdom that it fails to see,
 And from its sackcloth and its ashes raise
 A strain of prayerful melody to Thee?
 Offering with equal faith and equal praise
 The sunbeam, or the cloud that marks its fleeting days?

AUGUST XXV.

“Buy the truth, and sell it not.”

PROVERBS, xxiii: 23.

POUR the jewels from thy hoard,
 In their richest casket stored,
 Gems, from Learning's mine profound,
 Diamonds from Golconda's bound,
 Wreaths by radiant Beauty wove,
 Buds of Hope, and flowers of Love,
 Pour them lavish o'er the spot,—
 Buy the truth, and sell it not.

What would pay thee for its loss?
 Gold without it is but dross,
 Love, a shadow light and vain,
 Knowledge, mockery and pain;
 Naught its absence might supply,
 Naught in earth, or sea, or sky,
 Naught in palace or in cot,—
 Buy the truth, and sell it not.

AUGUST XXVI.

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are from above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."

COLOSSIANS, iii: 1.

IF with the Lord your hope doth rest,
With Christ who reigns above,
Loose from its bonds the captive breast,
And heavenward point its love.

Yes, heavenward. Ye're of holy birth,
Bid your affections soar
Above the vain delights of earth,
Which fade, to bloom no more.

Seek ye some pure and thornless rose?
Some friend with changeless eye?
Some fount whence living water flows?
Go, seek those things on high.

Thither bid Hope a pilgrim go,
And Faith her mansion rear,
Even while amid this world of woe
Ye shed the stranger's tear:

If folly tempts, or sin allures,
Be deaf to all their art,
So shall eternal life be yours
When time's brief years depart.

AUGUST XXVII.

"They that watch for the morning."

PSALMS, CXXX: 6.

YE tell the watcher, seated long
Beside the couch of pain,
"Behold the night away hath roll'd,
And brilliant through her gate of gold
Aurora comes again."

Ye tell the sea-boy as he treads
The deck with weary eye,
Musing amid his night-watch drear
On home's low porch, and brothers dear,
"Look up! the morn is nigh."

And to the parting friend who feels
The unutter'd sorrow swell,
Sweet words of blessed hope ye say
To gird him on his pilgrim-way,
And smile a kind farewell.

So, unto Him, who pale with pain,
Life's latest vigil takes,
Speak holy thoughts of faith and cheer
Nor daunt the soul with moan and tear
That earth's last mooring breaks:

Cry not, "Come back, come back to us,"
With selfish grief and dread,
But firmly hold the failing hand,
Until it grasp the angel-band,
Nor weep till breath hath fled.

AUGUST XXVIII.

"The earth was without form, and void and darkness was upon the deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."
GENESIS, i: 2.

WHEN at creation's morning-hour,
Before the kingly Sun
Assum'd his place, or Night's pale Queen
Her regency begun,

Before the earliest, infant star
Its sacred urn employ'd,
Then moved the Spirit of the Lord
Amid that formless void.

So, when the sway of sin is broke
Within the human heart,
And 'mid that elemental war
Contrition's waters start,

Ere Faith, the guiding star hath risen,
Or Hope, with moonlight ray,
Or christian Charity transform'd,
The darkness into day,

Breathe, Holy Spirit, on the flood
Of penitential woe,
And bid the chaos of despair
With light and beauty glow.

AUGUST XXIX.

"It is a good thing to show forth Thy faithfulness every night."

PSALMS, xcii: 2.

LORD, the shades of night surround us,
Homeward call thy wandering sheep,
Throw Thy sheltering arm around us,
Safe from every danger keep,
Poor and needy,
Oh protect us, while we sleep.

Praise we bring for every blessing,
O'er us, like the dew-drops shed,
May we, thy rich grace possessing,
Rest in peace the weary head,
Holy Angels!
Fold your pinions round our bed.

When this day of life is ended,
When its hopes and fears are o'er,
By a Saviour's love befriended
Guide us to the heavenly shore,
Oh receive us,
Where the light shall fade no more.

AUGUST XXX.

"And as thy servant was busy, here and there, he was gone."

1ST KINGS, xx : 40.

GONE! Who was gone? The Holy Paraclete,
 Who knocks so gently at the human heart,
 Entreating it to turn from sin and live.
 He waited, and was griev'd, and went away,
 Ah! who can tell if He will e'er return.

Yes, busy here and there, 'mid trifling things,
 Plantings and prunings, merchandise and gain
 The sale of oxen, or the care of gold,
 Things I call'd duties, busied here and there,
 I let the solace of my soul depart,
 The Comforter, the blessed Paraclete,—
 Alas! who knows if He will e'er return.

AUGUST XXXI.

"The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."

JEREMIAH, viii : 20.

THE sickle was resting, its labors were done,
 And the reapers had gone ere the set of the sun,
 They had gone by the side of the slow-rolling wain
 That pour'd in the garner its burden of grain,
 And a moan swell'd the wing of the breeze as it waved,
 "The harvest is over, and we are not saved."

The gems of the garden, when frost chills the air,
To the cells of the green-house for safety repair,
And the florist exults as he sees them expand
'Neath the beams of the sun and the showers from his
 hand,
But hark! to a cry where the field-flowers had waved
"The summer is ended, and we are not saved."

Oh human souls! in your course below,
Chasing butterflies to and fro,
Toying with phantoms night and day,
While time's little hour-glass is wasting away,
Beware of that voice! like a maniac it raved,
The Harvest! The Summer! and we are not saved."

September.

SEPTEMBER I.

"He shall gather the lambs with his arm."

ISAIAH, xl: 11

I WAS a straying sheep,
I wandered from my guide,
Along the broad and flowery road,
My lambkin by my side.

A warning call I heard,
"Come back to me," it said,
I knew it was my Shepherd's voice,
But turn'd away my head.

Among the giddy throng
I sported far and wide,
By the green margin of the brooks,
My lambkin by my side.

Dark clouds obscured the sky,
I stood alone that day,
I knew it was the Shepherd's hand
That took my lamb away.

He took it to His fold,
My eyes with tears were dim,
Then, through the darkness and the storm,
I rose and followed Him.

The steep and narrow way,
With humbled heart I took,
I knew it was the path He went,
The path that I forsook;

Yes, still I'll climb and pray,
Till this short life is o'er,
And strive to find my folded lamb,
And never wander more.

SEPTEMBER II.

"The Father seeketh such to worship Him."

JOHN, iv: 23.

I SAW her entering to the House of God,
A humble woman, clad in homely guise,
And in her steps two little daughters trod
Heeding her movements with attentive eyes,

Fast by the chancel-rail they sate, or stood,
No pew was theirs,—and where she knelt they knelt,
Shaping themselves, as well as childhood could,
By the devotion that her bosom felt;

What didst thou ask, meek suppliant, in thy prayer,
Amid the tides of wealth that round thee flow?
Strength for a lot of labor and of care?
Christ's sweet compassion in thine hour of woe?

Look up, for tho' thy faith with clouds be dim,
God notes the lowly soul: its worship pleaseth Him.

SEPTEMBER III.

"His mercies are new every morning."

LAMENTATIONS, iii: 23.

OH Thou, who bounteous to their need,
Dost all earth's thronging pilgrims feed,
Dost bid for them, in every clime,
The pregnant harvest know its time,
The flocks in verdant pastures dwell,
The corn aspire, the olive swell,
Fain would we bless the sleepless Eye,
That doth our hourly wants descry.
Thou pour'st us from the nested grove,
The minstrel melody of love.
Thou giv'st us of the fruitage fair
That summer's ardent suns prepare,
Of honey from the rock that flows,
And of the perfume of the rose,
And of the breeze whose balm repairs
The sick'ning waste of earth-born cares.
And though, perchance, the ingrate knee
Bends not in praise nor prayer to thee,
Though Sin that stole with traitor-sway
Even Peter's loyalty away,
May strongly weave its sevenfold snare,
And bring dejection and despair;
Yet not the morn with cheering eye
More duly lights the expecting sky,
Nor surer speeds on pinion light,
Each measured moment's trackless flight,
Than comes thy mercy's kind embrace
To feeble man's forgetful race.

SEPTEMBER IV.

‘Show us the Father.’

JOHN, xiv: 8.

HAVE ye not *seen* Him, when through parted snows
 Wake the first kindlings of the vernal green?
 When 'neath its modest veil the arbutus blows,
 And the pure snow-drop bursts its folded screen?
 When the wild rose, that asks no florist's care,
 Unfoldeth its rich leaves, have ye not seen Him there?

Have ye not *seen* Him, when the infant's eye,
 Through its bright sapphire-windows shows the mind?
 When in the trembling of the tear or sigh,
 Floats forth that essence, trembling and refined?
 Saw ye not Him, the author of our trust,
 Who breathed the breath of life into a frame of dust?

Amid the stillness of the Sabbath morn,
 When vexing cares in tranquil slumber rest,
 When in the heart the holy thought is born,
 And Heaven's high impulse warms the waiting breast,
 Have ye not *felt* Him, while your kindling prayer
 Swelled out in tones of praise, announcing God was there?

Show us the Father! If ye fail to trace
 His chariot where the stars majestic roll,
 His pencil 'mid earth's loveliness and grace,
 His presence in the Sabbath of the soul,
 How can you see Him till the day of dread,
 When to assembled worlds the book of doom is read?

SEPTEMBER V.

"Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds?"

JOB, xxxvii: 16.

OH, meditorial ministry of clouds,
 Tempering the red rays of the ruling Sun,
 How beauteous and beneficent ye are.
 With what a glorious pomp, ye sentinel
 His western gate, in gorgeous robes array'd,
 To pay observance to his high estate.
 Ocean, who gloateth o'er his secret hoard,
 Well knows what revenue from you accrues
 To his exchequer, and with shout of waves
 Welcomes the rushing rivers that ye send
 With fuller tribute to his heaving breast.
 Earth too, ye bless, and from your store-house pour
 Treasures of rain and weight of harvest-gold,
 Swelling to wilder leaps the dwindled stream
 That throws its crystal o'er the mountain steep,
 Gladdening the shrunk moss on the ruin'd tower,
 And the brown fern amid the Bernese Alps,
 And the deep penury of plants that creep
 Up through the desert-sands.

We bless ye, Clouds!

And by your lore instructed, fain would keep
 The path of duty, wheresoe'er it tend,
 Nor in its highest agencies o'erlook
 The humblest promptings of sweet charity.

SEPTEMBER VI.

"Wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face."

ISAIAH, viii : 17

WHERE'ER thy earthly lot is cast,
Whate'er its duties prove,
To toil 'neath penury's piercing blast,
Or share the cell of love.,
Or 'mid the pomp of wealth to live,
Or wield of power the rod,
Still as a faithful servant strive
To wait alone on God.

Should disappointment's blighting sway
Destroy of joy the bloom,
Till one by one thy joys decay
In darkness and the tomb,
Should Heaven its cheering smile withhold
From thy disastrous fate,
And foes arise like billows bold,
Still on Jehovah wait.

When timid dawn her couch forsakes,
Or noon-day splendors glide,
Or eve her curtain'd pillow takes,
While watchful steps preside,
Or midnight drives the throngs of care
Far from her ebon throne,
Unwearied in thy fervent prayer
Wait thou on God alone.

But should He still conceal his face
 Till flesh and spirit fail,
 And bid thee darkly run the race
 Of Time's receding vale,
 With what a doubly glorious ray
 His smile will light the sky
 Where ransom'd souls rejoicing lay
 Their robes of mourning by.

SEPTEMBER VII.

"Whose shall those things be, that thou hast provided?"

LUKE, xii: 20.

THOU hast a fair domain,
 Most proud and princely halls,
 And richly on the crystal pane,
 Through bowering foliage fresh with rain,
 The golden sunbeam falls;
 Green vine-leaves o'er thy grotto meet
 In soft and fragrant gloom,
 What form shall fill thy favorite seat
 When thou art in the tomb?

The wealth of every age
 Thou hast concentered here,
 The ancient tome, the classic page
 The wit, the poet, and the sage
 All at thy call appear;
 But studious brain and vigorous breast
 To palsying Death must yield,
 Whose eye shall on those volumes rest
 When thine in dust is seal'd?

Thou lov'st the burnish'd gold,
The silver from the mine,
The diamond glittering pure and cold,
And hoards, perchance, of gems untold,
Do in thy coffers shine ;
But when affection's heart shall weep
A few brief tears for thee,
And thou on turf-clad pillow sleep,
Whose shall those treasures be ?

Yet if thy love to God, sincere
By love to man was shown,
By pity's deed, contrition's tear,
Faith in a Saviour's merits dear,
Forgetful of thine own ;
If thou hast in time's casket laid
Such treasures rich and free,
Beyond cold death's oblivious shade,
Look! they shall go with thee.

SEPTEMBER VIII.

"Complete in Him."

COLOSSIANS, ii: 10.

WHAT is complete? The mighty oak
That seems to mock at time,
And while the race of man decay,
Still higher rears, with broader sway
Its canopy sublime.

What is complete? The wondrous ship
That from the oak doth spring,
And wisely steer'd o'er adverse tides,
Majestic toward its haven guides,
As tho' 'twere Ocean's king.

As the firm tree that meets the storm
Unscathed in heart and limb,
As the strong ship its course controls,
Tho' wild the opposing billow rolls,
So may the Saviour of our souls
Find us complete in Him.

SEPTEMBER IX.

"The Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends."

Job, xlii : 10.

WHILE on this pilgrimage we go,
O'er valley, rock, and thorn,
Where sometimes wrecking tempests blow
Or flowers our path adorn,
If down the crumbling verge of hope
We plunge 'mid whelming cares,
Uphold us with your prayers, sweet friends,
Uphold us with your prayers.

So shall you, in the trying hour
 Of your extremest need,
 Feel innate courage from the source
 Whence all good things proceed,
 And like the stricken man of Uz,
 Find 'neath the gloomiest shade
 His "own captivity was turn'd
 When for his friends he pray'd."

SEPTEMBER X.

"Peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked."

1ST KINGS, xviii: 27

MY dull heart slept. Its panoply was off,
 The festal hour had lulled it, and the dew,
 Swept from the flowers of brief prosperity,
 Fell like an opiate on it. The world's star
 Was dominant. And so it coldly slept,
 Even in the house of God. The wakeful ear,
 That trusty sentinel, essayed in vain
 To rouse its lethargy. The organ poured
 Such full, exulting melody, so claimed
 From all the living, one pure hymn of praise,
 That rapture's flush burned on the brightened cheek.
 Still on the secret altar of the heart
 No incense flowed.

Sweet music sued in vain
 At that sealed portal. Eloquence sprang forth,
 From the blest teacher's lips, and in strong bands

Led chained attention, yet the affections lay
In their dead trance. But lowly prayer knelt down
Breathing her meek voice into mercy's ear,
Through His dear name, who bought the forfeit soul
With His own blood. Firm faith's unearthly glance,
And hope, bright-winged, and saintly charity,
Sustained the thrilling cadence, while it bore
The sinner to his God. Then woke the heart,
And from its trembling fountain poured the tear,
Which penitence required, and humbly sought
That Sabbath blessing which it else had lost.
—So prayer prevailed, when music, child of Heaven,
And hallowed eloquence, like sounding brass,
And tinkling cymbal, smote the dreaming soul
In vain.

SEPTEMBER XI.

“How shall I bring the Ark of God home?”

1ST CHRONICLES, xiii: 12.

TURN thee to thine own broad waters,
Labor in thy native earth,
Call salvation's sons and daughters
From the clime that gave thee birth,

Here are souls by sin benighted,
Here are evils to be slain,
Virtues in their budding blighted,
Spirits bound in error's chain,

Raise the Gospel's glorious streamer
Where our western forests wave,
Followers of the blest Redeemer
Serve Him 'mid your fathers' graves.

SEPTEMBER XII.

"Isaac went out to meditate, at the eventide."

GENESIS, xxiv : 63.

GRAY Twilight's shade to me is dear
More than the blushing day,
Or noontide plenitude of light,
Or sober certainty of night,
Or moon with silver ray.

For then, at scepter'd Memory's call,
Long buried years awake,
And tread in charmed circles back
With music, o'er a flowery track
Their ancient seats to take;

And parted friends, of whom we say
In beds of clay they rest,
Bend meekly down from glory's sphere,
And with their angel smile or tear
Allure us to be blest.

SEPTEMBER XIII.

"This is not your Rest."

MICAH, ii: 10.

WHEN Heaven's unerring pencil writes on every pilgrim's
breast,
Its passport to Time's changeful shore, "*Lo, this is not your
rest,*"
Why build ye towers, ye fleeting ones? why bowers of
fragrance rear?
As if the self-deceiving soul might find its Eden here.

In vain! in vain! wild storms will rise and o'er your fabrics
sweep,
Yet when loud thunders wake the wave, and deep replies
to deep,
When in your path, Hope's broken prism doth shed its
parting ray,
Spring up and fix your tearful eye on undeclying day.

If like an ice-bolt to the heart, frail Friendship's altered eye
Admits those rosy wreaths are dead, it promis'd should not
die,
Lift, lift to an Eternal Friend, the agonizing prayer,
For souls that put their trust in Him shall never know
despair.

If Fancy, she who bids young thought its freshest incense
bring,
By stern reality rebuk'd, should fold her stricken wing,

There is a brighter, broader realm than she has yet reveal'd,
 From flesh-girt man's exploring eye, and anxious ear concealed.

Earth is Death's palace: to his court he summons great and small,
 The crown'd, the homeless, and the slave, are but his minions all;
 We turn us shrinking from the truth, his close pursuit we fly,
 But falter on the grave's dark brink and lay us down to die.

SEPTEMBER XIV.

"Then, all the disciples forsook him, and fled."

MATTHEW, xxvi: 56

FLED? And from whom? The Man of woe
 Who at Gethsemane had felt,
 Such pangs as bade the blood-drops flow
 And the crushed heart with anguish melt?
 They who were gathered round his board,
 Partook his love, beheld his power,
 Saw the sick healed, the dead restored,
 Failed they to watch one fearful hour?

All fled? Yet where was he who laid
His head upon that sacred breast,
By Friendship's holy ardor made
A cherished, an illustrious guest?
He too, who walked with Christ the wave,
When the mad sea confessed his sway,
And strangely sealed her gaping grave,
Fled *these* forgetfully away?

Yes, all forsook their Master's side
When foes and dangers clustered round,
And when in bitterness he cried
'Mid the dread garden's awful bound;
Yet firm and faithful near him stood
The host of Heaven, a guardian train,
Deploring man's ingratitude,
And wondering at his Saviour's pain.

Oh ye! whose hearts in secret bleed,
O'er transient hope, like morning dew,
O'er friendship faithless in your need,
Or love to all its vows untrue,
Who shrink from persecution's rod
Or slander's fang, or treachery's tone,
Turn meekly to the Son of God,
And in His grief forget your own.

SEPTEMBER XV.

“He took a child, and set him in the midst.”

MARK, ix: 36.

HE set him in the midst, that Jewish child,
 With his clear lustrous eye, and raven hair,
 A simple wonder on his timid brow,
 Yet by the Saviour's side content to stand
 If he might only see that holy smile,
 And hear the Voice Divine.

The little child

Still standeth in our midst. A blessed love,
 Casting out self, he bringeth in his hand
 To the young mother, and she so may use
 The ministry of this new principle,
 That all her cares, yea, all her pains shall work
 A fitness in her trusting soul for Heaven.

Oh gentle Childhood! by a Saviour made
 The Pattern and Exemplar unto those
 Who through this treacherous world would come to Him,
 Sweet blossom of our being! be our guide,
 That 'mid the fever and the dust of time,
 Wildered, and heavy shod, and sad at heart,
 And travel-worn, we may not lose at last
 Thy guileless model of the pure in heart,
 Who shall see God.

SEPTEMBER XVI.

"Abide ye here, and I will go yonder and worship."

GENESIS, xxii: 5.

I WARN the worldly cares away
That seek to rule the brain,
And thus enforce their tyrant sway
Of vanity and pain,

I say to all that earth-born race,
Abide ye here, below,
To worship in yon Holy Place,
My feet this day shall go,

And I must wrap the robe of prayer
Around a lowly breast,
And thus the wedding-garment wear
That sanctifies the guest,

And with the cheerfulness of hope
That from God's promise springs
Bear my oft-drooping spirit up,
As on an eagle's wings.

So, shall these Sabbath hours that roll,
In duties calm and blest,
With seraph-finger point the soul
To Heaven's eternal rest.

SEPTEMBER XXII.

"The fashion of this world passeth away."

1ST CORINTHIANS, vii : 31.

A ROSE upon her mossy stem,
 Fair queen of Flora's gay domain,
 All graceful wore her diadem,
 The brightest 'mid the brilliant train;
 But evening came, with frosty breath,
 And, ere the quick return of day,
 Her beauties, in the blight of death,
 Had pass'd away.

I saw, when morning gemmed the sky,
 A fair young creature gaily rove,
 Her moving lip was melody,
 Her varying smile the charm of love;
 At eve I came, but on her bed
 She drooped, with forehead pale as clay,
 "What dost thou here?" she faintly said,
 "Passing away."

I looked on manhood's towering form
 Like some tall oak when tempests blow,
 That scorns the fury of the storm
 And strongly strikes its root below;
 Again I looked,—with idiot cower
 His vacant eyes' unmeaning ray
 Told how the mind of godlike power
 May pass away.

O earth! no better wealth hast thou?
 No balsam for the heart that bleeds?
 Fade all thy blossoms on their bough?
 Fail all thy props like bruised reeds?
 The soul replied, "My hopes are wreath'd
 Around the bowers of changeless day,
 Where angel tones have never breath'd,
 'Passing away.'"

SEPTEMBER XXIII.

"The way of transgressors is hard."

PROVERBS, xiii: 15.

IN vain the heart that goes astray,
 From virtue's seraph-guarded way,
 May hope that feelings just and free,
 Meek peace, or firm integrity,
 Or innocence with snowy vest,
 Will condescend to be its guest.
 — As soon within the viper's cell,
 Might pure and white-winged spirits dwell,
 As soon the flame of quenchless gleam
 Glow in the chill and turbid stream:
 For by strong links a secret chain
 Connects our wanderings with our pain,
 And Heaven ordains it thus, to show
 That bands of vice are bonds of woe.

SEPTEMBER XIX.

"At even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased."

MARK, i: 32.

JUDEA'S summer-day went down,
And lo! from vale and plain
Around the heavenly Healer throng'd
A sick and sorrowing train.

The pallid brow, the hectic cheek,
The cripple bow'd with care,
And he whose soul dark demons lash'd
To foaming rage were there.

He raised his hand, the lame man leap'd,
The blind forgot their woe,
And with a startling rapture gaz'd
On Nature's glorious show.

Up from his bed of torpor rose
The paralytic pale,
While the loath'd leper dar'd once more
His fellow-man to hail.

The lunatic's distorted brow,
With smiles of love o'erspread,
Rejoic'd the household band that long
Had trembled at his tread.

The mother to her idiot boy
The name of Jesus taught,
Who thus with sudden touch impell'd
The chaos of his thought.

Yes, all that sad, imploring train
 He healed, ere evening fell,
 And speechless joy was born that night
 In many a lonely cell.

Ere evening fell? Oh ye, who find
 The chills of age descend,
 And with the luster of your locks
 The almond blossoms blend,

Haste, ere the darkening shades of night
 Have every hope bereaved,
 Nor leave the safety of the soul
 Unstudied, unachieved.

SEPTEMBER XX.

“The City lieth four-square.”

REVELATIONS, xxi: 16.

SYMMETRICAL, and of proportions vast,
 Magnificent, and robed in glorious light,
 Like gold and jasper through a crystal stone,
 Was that Celestial City seen of old
 By him of Patmos, and with pen sublime
 Sketch'd on a page inspired.

We may not soar
 Like him, on wing of mystery and might;
 Yet searching at the threshold, hope to find
 Symbol or tablet, such as wisdom gives.
 She bids us build our christian character

On the same model, firm, consistent, strong,
 Four-square, cemented well in every part,
 The mind, the heart, the conscience, and the soul,
 Knowledge, and truth, and love, and fear of God:
 A solid edifice, whose topmost stone
 Heaven's grace shall crown.

SEPTEMBER XXI.

"See that ye love one another, with a pure heart, fervently."

1ST PETER, i: 23.

LOVE marks the born of God,
 Love moves the seraph-train,
 Love is the key-tone of the song
 That fills the heavenly plain.

Kindle it here on earth
 And let its fervor glow
 Toward Him who is its purest Source
 'Mid all His works below.

It bindeth to His Throne
 With strong, electric chain,
 How can ye be shut out of Heaven
 If Love within you reign?

SEPTEMBER XXII.

"Godliness with contentment is great gain."

1ST TIMOTHY, vi: 6.

THINK'ST thou the steed that restless roves
O'er rocks and mountains, fields and groves,
 With wild, unbridled bound,
Finds fresher pasture than the bee,
On thymy bank, or vernal tree,
Intent to store her industry,
 Within her waxen round?

Think'st thou the fountain forc'd to turn
Thro' marble vase, or sculptur'd urn,
 Affords a sweeter draught,
Than that which in its native sphere,
Perennial, undisturb'd, and clear,
Flows, the lone traveler's thirst to cheer,
 And wake his grateful thought?

Think'st thou the man whose mansions hold
The worldling's pomp and miser's gold,
 Obtains a richer prize,
Than he who in his cot at rest,
Finds heavenly peace, a willing guest,
And bears the promise in his breast
 Of treasure in the skies?

SEPTEMBER XXIII.

"Ye shall find rest unto your souls."

MATTHEW, xi: 29.

REST, in this world of toil?
Where still from sun to sun
The busy hand its work pursues,
Yet finds it never done?

Rest, where the weary foot
Its tread-mill labor plies?
Rest, for the plodding, thinking brain,
Whence needful slumber flies?

Rest, for the bleeding heart,
On thousand spear-points toss'd,
Whose plants of healing and of hope
Feel oft untimely frost?

Rest, while Diseases watch
To snatch this fleeting breath?
Rest, on this slippery verge of time
That crumbles into death?

Yes, there is rest even here
For the immortal soul
That in humility and love
Doth yield to God's control,

That coming unto Him
For courage to endure,
Shall find in every time of need,
His blessed promise sure.

SEPTEMBER XXIV.

"Examine yourselves."

2ND CORINTHIANS, xiii: 5.

SEEK not of man with light applause to pay
The priceless guerdon of a well-spent day,
Wait not for him to weigh the generous deed,
But spread the scroll, and bid thy Conscience read.

Then as each hour her strict review sustains
Of all its motives, energies, or gains,
Regard that Judging Power with earnest eye
Who scans so sternly as the thoughts pass by,
And if She smile, receive the rapturous meed
And thank the Author of each upright deed,
Yield with sweet prayer to slumber's gentle sway,
For He shall guard the night, who deign'd to bless the day.

SEPTEMBER XXV.

“Take heed,—and be quiet.”

ISAIAH, vii: 4.

HEARKEN, Oh king of Judah, 'mid thy fear!
 War, and its tidings vex him. Syria comes,
 Confederate with Ephraim,—'gainst his realm,
 Brother and foe join hands, intent to waste
 The house of David. See, his heart is mov'd,
 And that of all his people, as the trees
 Bend in the forest 'neath a mighty wind.

Enwrapp'd in majesty of soul serene,
 Comes forth the eloquent seer. Lo, there he stands
 Just by the conduit of the upper pool,
 To meet the troubled monarch, and recount
 The message of the Lord. “Hearken,—he cries
 Unto king Ahaz, “Fear not,—yet take heed,—
 And be thou quiet.”

Blessed words are these,
 Of guidance to the wanderer on his course,
 In every age. Not with a soul supine,
 Drifting along in careless jollity,
 Nor yet with arrogance or lassitude,
 Oh, christian pilgrim, hold thy way on earth,
 But ever with bright lamp and girded loins,
 Of sin, of folly, and their snares take heed,
 Take earnest heed.

Yet, when thy best is done,
 Still, be thou quiet, for Jehovah reigns.

SEPTEMBER XXVI.

“On thee do I wait all the day.”

PSALMS, XXV: 5.

SEE, dawn amid the mountains
Unfold her pinions gray,
While in Aurora's cradle
Awakes the new-born day;
A gift of boundless mercy,
Our upward course to aid,
To where there shall be night no more,
Nor twilight's gathering shade.

Gird on the christian armor
That bright as gold doth glow,
For wheresoe'er the day shall lead
'Twill brighten as we go;
Even should a storm portentous
Enwrap the sky in woe,
Say, “the Sun shines above the cloud,
And soon will shine below.”

If from thy forehead falleth
Some wreath by fancy wove,
Some leaflet of ambition
Or budding rose of love,
Reign the borrowed treasure
Which never was thine own,
Without a murmur in thy heart,
Or one repining tone.

Should deeper sorrow meet thee,
 For lo! it comes to all,
 And "Mene, Mene, Tekel," write,
 Upon thy palace-wall,
 Or in the guarded nursery
 Where thy soul's jewels rest,
 Blame not a Father's discipline,
 He knoweth what is best.

If solemn Death should warn thee
 Before this closing day,
 Bid sweet farewell to things of earth,
 And calmly pass away;
 Yea, smile with angel triumph
 The parting friend to cheer,
 Thou hast the pass-word of Heaven's gate,
 Go forth without a fear.

SEPTEMBER XXVII.

"I change not."

MALACHI, iii: 6.

MAN changeth: his delightful morn
 A transient glory lends,
 His temples take the tint of time,
 And o'er his staff he bends;
 Hope casts the garland from her brow,
 Her torches cease to burn,
 And beauty spreads a parting wing,
 Not to return.

Power, o'er a broken scepter weeps,
Far from his throne he flies,
The princely heir doth pine for bread,
Or in a hovel dies ;
Love hath its pain, as well as smile,
Even like an April day,
And when triumphant in its wile,
Hastes quick away.

Earth changes too, as round and round
Her glowing axle turns,
Her mountains sink, her mole-hills rise,
Her heart volcanic burns ;
But God, her Maker, He who reigns
O'er all creation's range,
Is firm, immoveable, serene,
He can not change.

SEPTEMBER XXVIII.

"For they that say such things; declare plainly that they seek a country."

HEBREWS, xi: 14

I HEAR the rising tempest moan,
My failing limbs have weary grown ;
The flowers are shut, the streams are dried,
The arid sands spread drear and wide,
The night-dews fall, the winds are high,
How far from home, O Lord, am I ?

I would not come with hoards of gold,
With glittering gems or cumbrous mold,
Nor dim my sight with gather'd dust
Of empty fame or earthly trust,
But hourly ask, as lone I roam,
How far from home? how far from home?

Not far! not far! the way is dark,
Fair hope hath quench'd her glow-worm spark;
The trees are dead beneath whose shade
My youth reclined, my childhood play'd;
Red lightning streaks the troubled sky,
How far from home, my God, am I?

Oh, find me in that home a place
Beneath the footstool of thy grace,
Though sometimes on the husks I fed,
And turn'd me from the children's bread,
Still bid thine angel-harps resound,
The dead doth live, the lost is found.

Reach forth thy hand with pitying care,
And guide me through the latest snare;
Methinks, even now, in bursting beams,
The radiance from thy casement streams,
No more I shed the pilgrim tear,
I hear thy voice, my home is near.

SEPTEMBER XXIX.

"If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father."

ST. JOHN, xiv : 28.

SMILE on the dying friend,
Uplift the tuneful hymn,
Gird him with words of prayerful trust
When the fixed eye grows dim,
Control the bitter pang,
The gushing tear restrain,
Nor cast thy selfish grief on him
Who strives with mortal pain.

Why should thy wailing cry
The ascending saint detain?
Keen anguish on the brow it loved
Might the glad spirit chain:
Why wouldst thou on the verge
Of this distressful state,
Hold back the traveler to the skies,
For whom the angels wait?

But when the rescued soul
Hath winged its wondrous way,
When the keen thrilling nerves no more
Disturb the peaceful clay,
Release thy struggling tears,
So long in durance kept,
Let nature's grief-swollen current flow,
Remembering, *Jesus wept.*

SEPTEMBER XXX.

"I looked, and behold, a door was opened in heaven."

REVELATIONS, iv: 1.

It seemed not as a dream, and yet I stood
Beside Heaven's gate. Its mighty valves were loosed,
And upward, from earth's tribulation, came
A soul, whose passport, signed in Calvary's blood,
Prevailed. Around the golden threshold's verge
I saw the dazzling of celestial wings,
Thronging to welcome it. The towering form
Of an archangel bore it company
Up to God's throne. Soft on my ear their tones,
Serenely wafted by ambrosial gales,
Fell like rich music.

"Wherefore didst thou pass
Weeping along thy pilgrimage? inquired
The sinless seraph?"

"Thorns beset my path.
I sought and found not. I obtained and mourned.
I loved and lost. Ingratitude and Hate
Did whet their serpent-tooth upon my fame.
My wealth took wing. I planted seeds of bliss,
And sorrow blossomed."

But the risen from earth
Faltered to mark that high archangel's glance,
Darken with strong surprise, as though it asked,
"Had thy felicity no deeper root,
Thou sky-born soul, for whom the Son of God
Bowed to be crucified?"

So when I saw,
Or dreamed I saw, that even in Heaven might dwell
Reproof and penitence, I prayed to look
Ever upon that flood of light which gilds
Each morning with its mercy, and whose beams
Are brightened every moment, and to bear
God's discipline with gladness;—that no tear
For trials lost be shed beyond the grave.

October.

OCTOBER I.

"He that maketh haste to be rich, shall not be innocent."

PROVERBS, xviii: 20.

WHY? King of Israel, why?

This span of time

Which God did give to buy Eternity,
 Man selleth unto gold, and is a slave.
 The sweet affections of his heart grow stern,
 And when the poor complain, he will not hear.
 He maketh haste and casteth overboard
 Whate'er impedes his voyage to the realm
 Where rich men dwell,—all rest of Sabbath hours,
 All hesitance of honesty, perchance
 Doth plunge his honor in an inky pool,
 And gain the fraud-blot that is never cleans'd.
 Yea, he deviseth evil for his heirs,
 Chaining their purposes of industry,
 And making them a mark for tempters' wiles,
 Or knaves to shoot at. These are reasons why
 That they who madly hasten to be rich,
 Shall not be innocent.

So, when I heard

Such words-from Solomon, I raised my heart
 In praise to God, that he had kept me safe
 From wildering torrents of prosperity.

OCTOBER 11.

"As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh and beareth them on her wings."
DEUTERONOMY, xxxii: 11.

'Twas noontide, and the eagle bird
On steady wing, and slow,
With ardent eye and heaving breast
Allured her young below.

While they, with pinions feebly spread,
In narrow circles vied,
Until with nobler courage filled
They ventured near her side,

Then mounting still, in spiral course,
With strength sublime they flew,
And soaring toward the king of day
Were lost in ether blue.

And as I watch'd their upward course
There rose a quicken'd prayer
For those who hold the immortal soul
Within their guardian care.

Oh, Christian mother, never cease
Beside the cradle nest,
At every waking morn to point
To regions of the blest,

And still, with undeclining zeal,
Embalm each evening hour,
As steals the dew-drop to the heart
Of the unfolding flower,

Nor shrink above yon cloud-wrapp'd hills
To lead thy nursling's way,
Lest the young eaglets' heavenward flight
Reprove thine own delay.

OCTOBER III.

"In them hath he set a tabernacle for the Sun."

PSALMS, xix: 4.

BRIGHT Clouds! Ye are gathering one by one,
Ye are sweeping in pomp round the dying sun,
With crimson banner, and golden pall,
Like a host to their chieftain's funeral;
Perchance ye tread to that hallowed spot,
With a muffled dirge, though we hear it not.

But methinks ye tower with a lordlier crest,
And a richer robe as he sinks to rest;
Not thus, in the day of his pride and wrath,
Did ye dare to press on his glorious path,
At his noontide glance ye have quaked with fear,
And hastened to hide in your misty sphere.

Do you say he is *dead*? Ye exult in vain,
With your rainbow tints and your swelling train:
He shall rise again with his strong, bright ray,
He shall reign with power when you fade away,
When you darkly cower in your vapory hall,
Fruitless, and naked, and noteless all.

The Soul! the Soul! with its eye of fire,
Thus, thus shall it soar when its foes expire,
It shall spread its wing o'er the ills that pained,
The evils that shadowed, the sins that stained,
It shall dwell where no rushing cloud hath sway,
And the pageants of earth shall have melted away.

OCTOBER IV.

"I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ."

ROMANS, i: 16.

No, not ashamed! How should we be
Of that which is our glory?
Of that which draws the line between
Christian and heathen story?

Destroys the idol and the rites
That plunge mankind in madness,
And gilds the midnight of the grave
With hope's exulting gladness?

Uplifts the mourner, ere he sinks
In unavailing sorrow,
And bids him from the life to come
Consoling balm to borrow?

Ashamed of Thee? Our blessed Lord!
The thought is profanation,
What should we do without Thine aid
In death and desolation?

Ah! whither turn, if when the flames
 Of judgment glow around us,
 Thou with the words, "*I know ye not,*"
 Shouldst ever more confound us?

Marked by Aunt C. 1867
Ed. 2nd 11

OCTOBER V.

"Wherefore, comfort one another, with these words."

1ST THESSALONIANS, IV: 18.

YON pilgrim see, in vestments gray,
 Whose bleeding feet bedew the way,
 O'er arid sands, with want opprest,
 Who toiling, knows no place of rest:
 Mourn ye, because the long-sought shrine
 He clasps in ecstasy divine,
 And lays his load of sin and gloom
 Repentant on a Saviour's tomb?
 —Behold, yon ship, with wrecking form,
 Her proud masts quivering to the storm,
 Rude winds and waves, with headlong force,
 Impel her on her dangerous course,
 The pallid crew their hope resign,
 And powerless view the surging brine:
 Mourn ye because the tempest dies,
 And in the haven moored she lies?
 —Emerging from the field of strife
 Where slaughter'd thousands waste their life,
 Yon warrior see, with gushing veins,
 Who scarce his frantic steed restrains;

The death-mist swims before his eyes
As toward the well-known spot he flies,
Where every fond affection lies.
Mourn ye, because to home restor'd,
Woman's white arms enwrap her lord,
And tears and smiles, with varying grace,
Fleet o'er his cherub children's face?
—Yet on his path of toil and woe,
The pilgrim from his shrine must go,
The ship amid the billows strain,
The warrior seek the war again:
But he, whose form to death has bow'd,
Whose spirit cleaves the ethereal cloud,
From him hath change and sorrow fled,
Why mourn ye, then, the righteous dead?

OCTOBER VI.

"He rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulcher."

MARK, XV: 46.

WHAT if he did?

The massy stone, that taxed
His utmost strength to heave, and seem'd to seal
The sepulcher securely,—look! behold!
The Angel's finger touch'd it, and it moved
Light as the wing of gossamer away.
He roll'd the stone, and deemed his work was done.
So, still it is with man.

He thinks to guard
His earthly treasures well. He turns the key
Upon his garner'd knowledge, gain'd with toil,
But Memory picks the lock and glides away;
And when he cometh, lo! a rifled cell,
Strew'd o'er with glittering fragments, and the walls
Hung with the mocking spider's tapestry.
He saith to Love, "*Stay here!*" and it is gone.
And where's the wealth he nightly gloated o'er,
Like some cold Alpine cliff, hoarding the snows
It well might give to swell the trickling streams,
Yet have enough?

We can not tell you where.
Perchance the flames, or wrecking billows may.

Roll ye no stone against the Christian's faith
Ye who exult in ridicule and pride;
For though ye call it dead, behold it lives,
Though buried it shall rise. Death and the Grave
Vanquish it not. Tho' an infuriate throng
Crush it in blood, like Stephen shall it see
Heaven open'd, and the Saviour whom it loves
Standing at God's right hand.

OCTOBER VII.

"Woe unto you."

MATTHEW, xxiii: 13.

*Væ vobis,** ye who fail to read
 The name that shines where'er you tread,
 The Alpha of our infant creed
 The Omega of the sainted dead,
 That glows where'er the pencil'd flowers
 Their tablet in the desert show,
 Where'er the mountain's rocky towers
 Frown darkly on the vale below:

Where roll the wondrous orbs on high
 In glorious order, strong and fair,
 In every letter of the sky
 That midnight writes, behold 'tis there,
 'Tis grav'd on Ocean's furrow'd brow
 And on the shell that gems his shore,
 And where the solemn forests bow,
Væ vobis, ye, who scorn the lore.

Væ vobis, all who trust on earth,
 Who lean on reeds that pierce the breast,
 Who toss the bubble-cup of mirth,
 Or grasp ambition's storm-wreathed crest,
 Who early rise, and late take rest,
 In Mammon's mine, the care-worn slave,
 Who find each phantom-race unblest,
 Yet shrink reluctant from the grave.

* Woe unto you.

OCTOBER VIII.

"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"

PSALMS, viii: 4.

WHEN on yon vaulted heavens I look,
That noblest page in Nature's book,
Where moons their changeful courses hold,
And stars ride forth on cars of gold,
Lord, what is man, that from above
Thou deign'st to visit him with love,
And kindly place him just below
The angel-guards that round thee glow?
Thou giv'st him power to rule the train
That glide within the unfathomed main,
And those that spread the radiant wing
And 'mid the fields of ether sing,
And those that roam the varied earth,
Of gentle kind, or savage birth.
Yet what is he, frail child of clay,
Who boasts o'er fleeting earth the sway,
Himself the being of a day?
Still like the rapid shuttle's flight
Receding from the gazer's sight,
That Thou, whom myriad hosts obey,
 Around Thy Throne above,
Should'st thus regard his noteless way,
 And visit him with love?

OCTOBER IX.

“My days are as a hand breadth.”

PSALMS, xxxix: 5

SCARCE a moment have we here,
For the sigh, the smile, the tear,
For the planting of our joys,
For the gilding of our toys,
For the rearing deep and wide,
Mansions of our power and pride,
Yet our busy thoughts devise,
 Yet our roving steps pursue,
Visions tho' our dazzled eyes
 Grow bewildered with the view.

Brittle hour-glass of a day,
How we shake its sands away,
How our hand-breadth span we waste,
In the madness of our haste,
With the dancing of the earth,
With its follies and its mirth;
Children are we here, of Time
 Nor that future life can see,
Where Eternity sublime
 Must our awful Parent be.

OCTOBER X.

" Being dead, yet speaketh."

HEBREWS, xi: 4.

Oh, spirits of the viewless dead,
If naught within this sphere of pain
May hope to lure your backward tread
To earth's fond intercourse again,

Bend down, and teach us not to mourn,
Unfold the radiant wing, and show
How at one rush the nerves were torn,
That bind so close to things below,

Press on the soften'd heart, how brief
Is its own stay 'mid faded flowers,
And raise it from the withering grief
That fain would waste its number'd hours.

Still, spirits of the viewless dead,
That erst with us held converse dear,
Bright o'er our souls Heaven's sunbeam shed,
And gently quell the bursting tear.

OCTOBER XI.

"In the morning, then, ye shall see the glory of the Lord."

EXODUS, xvi: 7.

OH, fill thyself with beauty, and be glad,
Thou, who dost see God walking every where
Among the cedar-tops and on the mists
That herald the sun-rising.

Cloud on cloud
Sweep o'er the concave, like an angel-host
To do His bidding. Thro' their cloven ranks
Looks forth the faint blue of the firmament,
Trembling and unassured. The sacred spires
Go boldly up to meet it. Here and there,
The cross that crowns them, wins a holy ray
That shuns the world below.

'Neath quiet roofs
Still sleep the people. Heaven be with you all,
Brethren and sisters, offspring of one Sire,
In whose great love, we live and move and hold
This hopeful being. Ere the morn shall rise
To bathe in glory every mountain-top,
He keepeth watch o'er all.

The new-born babe
That hath no power to stretch its hand, is strong
In His protection. Consecrate to Him
The waking thought, and let it clearly bear
His image walking with us through the day
So Earth shall be as Eden.

OCTOBER XII.

"They despised the Pleasant Land."

PSALMS, cvi: 24.

THE adventurous vessel, whose sails unfurl'd
 To pierce the veil of this Western World,
 Joy'd as it near'd that unknown shore
 At the floating plants that the billows bore:
 Even thus may we trace on the sea of time
 Branches and wreaths from an unseen clime,
 A fragrance that flows from a glorious strand,
 Despise not the breath of the Pleasant Land.

Birds of bright plumage and tuneful note
 Hover'd around the explorer's boat,
 With greetings fair, and a truthful test,
 That their perils were o'er and their labor blest:
 So, breaks on the soul as its haven draws near,
 The song of the angels in melody clear:
 Oh! list to the strains of that white-wing'd band,
 Despise not the voice of the Pleasant Land.

OCTOBER XIII.

"When he is old, he will not depart from it."

PROVERBS, xxii: 6.

MAKE bright the hearth where children throng
 In innocence and glee,
 With smiles of love, the caroled song,
 The spirit's harmony,

The healthful sports the cheek that flush,
The mother's fond caress,
Nor let the stateliest father blush
His merry boy to bless.

For far adown the vale of life
When he his lot shall bear,
That hallowed gleam shall cheer the strife
And gild the clouds of care,

If midnight storms and breakers roar,
Its treasured spell shall be
A lighthouse 'mid the wrecking shore,
The star of memory,

Shall warn him, when the syren's wiles
His faltering feet entice ;
Make bright the hearth where childhood smiles,
And guard the man from vice

OCTOBER XIV.

"In their mouth was found no guile."

REVELATION, xiv: 5.

FORTH, as the buds of Spring they come,
Around our hearts they twine,
With all their growing, winning charms,
Like tendrils of the vine,

Yet oft, while in their cloudless joy
They feel the morning ray,
And feed upon the dews of love,
They fleet like dews away.

Soft lisping tones were on their lip,
 Affliction's tenderest wile,
 The earnest wish, the cherished name,
 But not the words of guile.

So, all unharmed by falsehood's snares
 That haunt our earthly race,
 Before the great white Throne they stand
 And see our Father's face,

And in His temple, day and night
 Do serve him, void of fear,
 Oh! let the memory of their bliss
 Stay the repining tear.

OCTOBER XV.

"The bush burned, and was not consumed."

EXODUS, iii: 2.

BURNING, yet not consumed. Oh brilliant Tree!
 Hath Frost thy veins with fires of fever fed?
 Or hectic mark'd thee for its ministry?
 The blood of martyrdom is on thy head
 And mournful garb, methinks, would suit thee best;
 Yet dost thou choose to flaunt in rich array,
 More than when Spring thy budding beauties drest,
 Or all thy pamper'd leaves at Summer's day
 Each with a pearl-drop hoarded daintily
 Did to the idle breeze exulting boast
 Its wealth would last forever. Gorgeous Tree!
 Proud of thy beauty 'mid the admiring host,
 Lo! winter's poverty is at thy door
 While thou dost lavish charms that shall return no more.

OCTOBER XVI.

“Commune with your own heart, upon your bed.”

PSALMS, IV: 4.

I SAW the curtains faintly gleam
At midnight, round my bed,
As in that still and wakeful hour
Unto my heart, I said,
“When will that time of rest arrive
Which God hath promised?”

For, day by day, with toil and care
’Mid countless foes we strive,
Or swept by tempests, scarcely keep
The spark of hope alive,
Ah! when will that appointed time
Of tranquil rest arrive?”

Then through my startled heart, methought,
There came an answering tone,
As if some blessed Angel spake
From his celestial Throne,
“God’s every task is beautiful,
Make thou His will, thine own.”

OCTOBER XVII.

"And he sent forth a raven, which went to and fro."

GENESIS, viii: 7.

OH Raven of the Deluge! whose lone wing
O'er the wild surge that whelm'd a buried world,
Swept on in weariness, and found no rest,
The Dove, thy gentle compeer hath gone back,
Folding her white wing in the Ark of Peace,
Return thyself!

But the black-pinion'd bird,
With drooping head kept on, tho' naught appear'd
Save one, great shoreless Sea. Oh soul of Man!
How long wilt thou with restless search explore
The sullen billows of this tossing world,
And find no place of rest?

Alas! how long
Shall that dark Raven be thy prototype?
See, at the open window of the Ark
Stretcheth a Hand to greet thee.

Haste! Return!
And Christ shall give thee rest.

OCTOBER XVIII.

"Fear not: but let your hands be strong."

ZECCHARIAH, viii: 13.

COMES there a time, when fortune's gale
 Your spreading sail no longer swells?
 Comes there a time, when self-distrust
 Your energy of action quells?
 Comes there a time, of toil and care
 Unpitied, and enduring long?
 Still at your post, where duty calls
 Fear not, but let your hands be strong.

Comes there a time, when pride bears rule,
 When truth and justice seem to sleep?
 When wealth and arrogance and power
 Their tyrant course exulting keep?
 Comes there a time, when foes oppose,
 Revile the truth, uphold the wrong?
 With eye on Him who saves the soul,
 Fear not, but let your hands be strong.

OCTOBER XIX.

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for."

HEBREWS, xi: 1.

HOPE'S soft petals love the beam
 That cheer'd them into birth,
 Pleasure seeks a glittering stream
 Bright, oozing from the earth,

Knowledge yields his lofty fruit
To those who climb with toil,
But Heaven's pure plant strikes deepest root
Where tears have dewed the soil.

Hope with flowerets strews the blast
When adverse winds arise,
Pleasure's garlands wither fast
Before inclement skies,
Knowledge often mocks pursuit
Involved in mazy shade,
But heaven-born Faith yields richer fruit
When other harvests fade.

OCTOBER XX.

'For God giveth to a man that is good in His sight, wisdom, and knowledge, and joy.'

ECCLESIASTES, ii: 26.

THE joy of wealth! 'tis built on pride,
Yet they who win can tell,
Of quicksands 'neath the golden tide,
Of heights whence thousands fell,
Of dangers in some baneful clime,
Or on the treacherous wave,
That waste of health the balmy prime,
Or ope the untimely grave.

The joy of knowledge! Ask the sage,
 Who o'er the midnight oil
 His vigil holds, from youth to age,—
 The worth of all his toil,
 Perchance disease his strength impairs,
 Or memory leaves her throne;
 Haste! ask the price of all his cares,
 Alas! the treasure's gone.

The joy of Heaven! 'Tis sought with prayers,
 With deeds that shun the view,
 With penitential tears and cares
 That worldlings never knew,
 And on the souls who here below
 God's righteous will obey,
 Shall He that priceless gift bestow
 Which none can take away.

OCTOBER XXI.

"Follow after the things which make for peace."

ROMANS, xiv: 19.

CHECK at their fountain-head,
 O Lord! the streams of strife,
 Nor let misguided man rejoice
 To take his brother's life.

Strike off the pomp and pride,
 That deck the deeds of war,
 And in their gorgeous mantle hide
 The blood-stained conqueror.

Bid every fire-side, press
 The gospel's peaceful claims,
 Nor let a christian nation bless,
 What its meek Master blames.

So shall the seeds of hate
 Be strangled in their birth,
 And Peace, the angel of thy love,
 Rule o'er enfranchised earth.

OCTOBER XXII.

"Have peace, one with another."

MARK, ix: 50.

THUS spake the Master, calling to his side
 The listening twelve.

But on each brow there lurk'd
 A heaving subsidence of turbid thought,
 As some spent billow leaveth darken'd dregs
 Of sea-weed on the shore. Among themselves
 They had disputed with unholy warmth,
 And an unwonted bitterness of words,
 Who should be greatest. Secretly they deem'd
 The strife was kept, when One who read the heart
 Was ever near them.

Then he took a child,
 A little child, and set him in their midst,
 That, from his meekness and humility
 They might receive reproof. The gentle eyes
 Of that selected model, with sweet gaze
 Turn'd wonderingly upon Him, as he said,
 Of such, Heaven's kingdom was.

The Voice Divine

Mov'd by the beauty of that living text,
 Made comment to the heart, earnest yet grave,
 Even to sadness, as a Teacher mourns
 To find the pupils whom he lov'd and led,
 Fail in the first and simplest rudiment
 Of all their knowledge.

Fierce Ambition's pain,
 The pride of place, the pharisaic boast
 "Stand by, for I am holier than thou,"
 He with resistless eloquence set forth,
 As inconsistent with their creed, and press'd
 The elemental precept of his faith,
 The essential test of true discipleship,
 Of self displaced, and charity begun,
 "*Have peace among yourselves.*"

OCTOBER XXIII.

"There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest."

JOB, iii: 17.

WE mourn for those who toil,
 The wretch who ploughs the main,
 The slave who helpless tills the soil
 Beneath the stripe and chain,
 For those who in the world's hard race
 O'erwearied and unblest,
 A host of gliding phantoms chase;
 Why mourn for those who rest?

We mourn for those who sin,
Bound in the tempter's snare,
Whom syren pleasure beckoneth in
To prisons of despair,
Whose hearts by whirlwind passions torn,
Are wreck'd on folly's shore ;
But why with futile sorrow mourn
For those who sin no more?

We mourn for those who weep,
Whom stern afflictions bend,
Despairing o'er the lowly sleep
Of lover or of friend ;
But they, who Jordan's swelling breast
No more are call'd to stem,
Who in the eternal haven rest,
We render thanks for them?

OCTOBER XXIV.

"Sorrow not, even as others which have no hope."

1ST THESSALONIANS, iv: 13.

CAN we forget the buds that wove
Bright garlands round our tent?
The links that from our chain of love
By death's stern grasp were rent?
The smiles that round our peaceful hall
Beam'd like the morning ray?
The tones that answer'd to our call
In music, where are they?

We call them *lost*, but Thou, our God,
 Shalt guard their peaceful sleep,
 And in Thy casket of the sod,
 The rich deposit keep,

And bid the grave each atom tell
 Thou to its charge hast given,
 And raise our "sown in tears" to swell
 The harvest-song of Heaven.

OCTOBER XXV.

"As the early dew, it goeth away."

HOSEA, vi: 4.

I SAW a drop of morning dew
 Like crystal gem serene,
 Bright sparkling on a verdant bough,
 All fresh in summer green.

The rising Sun exhaled the tear,
 And drank it, as it shone,
 A sudden tempest cleft the bough,
 'It trembled and was gone.

Was not that dew-drop like the bloom
 And glory of our span?
 And yonder reft and blighted bough
 Like the frail hope of man?

OCTOBER XXVI.

"Is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well."

2ND KINGS, iv : 26.

"Is it well with the child?" And she answered, "'Tis well."

But I gazed on the mother who spake,
For the tremulous tear as it sprang from its cell
Bade a doubt in my bosom awake,
And I marked how the bloom from her features had fled,
So late in their loveliness rare,
And the hue of the watcher that bends o'er the dead
Was gathering in pensiveness there.

"Is it well with the child?" And she answered, "'Tis well."

I remembered its beauty and grace,
When the tones of its laughter did tunefully swell,
In affections delighted embrace,
And through their long fringe as it rose from its sleep,
Its eyes beamed a rapturous ray,
Then I wondered that silence should settle so deep
O'er the home of a being so gay.

"Is it well with the child?" And she said, "It is well."

"It hath tasted of sickness and pain,
Of the pang, and the groan, and the gasp it might tell,
It never will suffer again;
In dreams, as an angel, it stands by my side,
In the garments of glory and love,
And I hear its glad lays to the Saviour who died,
'Mid the choir of the blessed above."

OCTOBER XXVII.

"Mene, Mene, Tekel."

DANIEL, v: 25.

TURN ye and look on ancient Babylon,
 The glory of Chaldea's excellence.
 —Where is thy golden throne, thou queen of earth?
 Thy heaven-defying walls, thy molten gates,
 Thy towering terraces of trees and flowers,
 Thy river-god Euphrates, thy gay priests,
 Effeminate kings, astrologers with eyes
 Sealed to the stars? Methinks even now I trace
 What struck Belshazzar 'mid his revels pale,
 The mystic fingers of a severed hand
 Inscribing *Mene* on thy moldering dust.

Ask ye for Tyre, for populous Nineveh,
 For temple-crowned Jerusalem, for Thebes,
 The hundred gated, or for Carthage proud?
 Go! ask the winnowing winds that waste the chaff
 Of human glory. Ask ye, who engraved
Tekel upon Pompeii's princely halls,
 When dust and ashes quenched their revelry?
 The hand that graves it on thy own frail frame,
 Thy palaces of pleasure, domes of pride,
 And bowers of hope. The pen of judging Heaven
 Writes "Mene, Mene, Tekel," on all joys
 That have their root in earth.

OCTOBER XXVIII.

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."

MARK, xvi: 15.

ONWARD! onward! men of Heaven,
Rear the Gospel's banner high;
Rest not till its light is given,
Star of every pagan sky;
Bear it where the pilgrim stranger
Faints 'neath Asia's vertic ray;
Bid the red-browed forest ranger
Hail it ere he fleets away.

Where the arctic ocean thunders,
Where the tropics fiercely glow,
Broadly spread its page of wonders,
Brightly bid its radiance flow.
India marks its luster, stealing,
Shivering Greenland loves its rays,
Afric, 'mid her deserts kneeling,
Lifts the mingled strain of praise.

Rude in speech, or grim in feature,
Dark in spirit though they be,
Show that light to every creature,
Prince or vassal, bond or free;
Lo! they haste to every nation,
Host on host the ranks supply,
Onward! Christ is your salvation,
And your death is victory!

OCTOBER XXIX.

"The entrance of Thy words giveth light."

PSALMS, cxix: 130.

HERE, in this world of ours
 Frost settleth on the bowers,
 Dark o'er the sleeted pane
 Stealeth the wintry rain,
 Mist curtaineth the streams,
 Dimly our pathway gleams
 As in a land of dreams.

Give light, O Lord.

Night broodeth o'er the vines,
 Night sigheth 'mid the pines,
 Night in the valleys deep,
 Night on the mountain steep,
 Night on the billows' crest,
 Night in the human breast,
 With sorrow and unrest.

Lord! give us light.

OCTOBER XXX.

"For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

JAMES, iv: 14

GRACEFUL dew-drop, sparkling bright,
 On the fair magnolia's height,
 Do the admiring grass-blades eye
 Thy patrician regency?

Or art thou with envy scann'd,
By the undeck'd, untitled band?
Lo! while yet our question sighs,
Quench'd, that orb of brilliance lies.

Such is man, the crown that wears,
Such is man, the palm that bears,
O'er his fellows, for an hour,
Vaunting in the guise of power,
As the vapor's fleecy fold
Takes a transient tint of gold,
Then, in dark oblivion's shade
Like the noteless dew-drop laid.

OCTOBER XXXI.

"I heard the voice of harpers, harping with their harps."

REVELATION, xiv: 2.

WILT listen to the heart? It hath a voice
That the world heeds not, an inwoven mesh
Of hidden harp-strings. If thou'lt silent walk
Down the sad pathways of humanity,
Thy soul may hear, on every passing breeze,
The sigh of such as have no comforter,
The song of joy, as from a grass-bird's nest,
The moan of hope, or dissonance of grief,
Till feeling in thyself the quickening tide
Of sympathy for all whom God hath made,
Thou lovest the Hand that rules these harmonies.
So listen, that the monotone of self
May die away, and with Creation's song
Of many parts, thine own sweet praise ascend,
Until thou join the harpers round the Throne.

November.

NOVEMBER I.

"Arise, and come away."

SONG OF SOLOMON, ii: 13.

THE vines are withered, O my love,
That erst we taught to tower,
And in a mesh of fragrance wove
Around our summer bower.

The ivy on the ancient wall
Doth in its budding fade,
The stream is dry, whose gentle fall
A lulling murmur made.

The tangled weeds have choked the flowers,
The trees, so lately bright,
In all the pomp of summer hours
Reveal a blackening blight.

There is a sigh upon the gale
That doth the willow sway,
A murmur from the blossoms pale,
"Arise, and come away."

So, when this life in clouds shall hide
Its garland bright and brief,
And every promise of its pride
Reveal the frosted leaf,

May the undying soul attain
That heritage sublime
Where comes no pang of parting pain,
Nor change of hoary time.

NOVEMBER II.

"As Jesus passed by, he saw a man that was blind from his birth."

JOHN, ix: 1.

BORN blind! Born blind!

He knew not what he lost,
When the great Sun went up the empurpled east,
Kindling to gladness all the mountain-tops,
Or night's fair Queen gave every quivering leaf
A coronet of silver.

Kindred face,
Mother and sister, with his childish hand
He oft had felt, exploring how the smile
Rounded each angle with a dimpling grace,
And wondering why the love-kiss lent the lips
Such symmetry. But now, with lapse of years
Both curiosity and hope lay dead,
In their cold, coffin'd cell. And so he stretch'd
His poor, thin hand, to take such alms as they
Who, idly basking in Creation's bliss,
Saw fit to cast him. There he sate and begg'd
Beside the Temple-porch.

He ne'er beheld
That glory of his Nation, gorgeous dome
And pinnacle, that touch'd the blue serene,
Altar, and arch, and shadowing cherubim,
And massy doors on golden hinges turning;
But still his Jewish heart leap'd high to hear
The chanting of the people and the priests,
When, with loud clang of instruments, they gave
Glad praise to Zion's God.

Born blind! Born blind!
And in that dark to die. He sate and begg'd,
Nor knew that by his side a Healer stood.

A Voice Divine! The horny eye-balls moved,
The pale lids quivered! Light in torrents flow'd,
And by the rapture of that ray, he learn'd
The unimagined loss of many years.
Bright noontide in a dazzling balance weigh'd,
The horror of that darkness which had clung
Shroudlike around him from his cradle-hour,
Uncomprehended, till that contrast came,
Dissolving all his soul in grateful joy.

Jesus of Nazareth went on his way.
He cared not for the shouting of the crowd.
Hail, and Hozanna, what were they to Him
Who in the might of goodness, meekly trod
The dusty pathways of Jerusalem?

NOVEMBER III.

"The morning cometh, and also the night."

ISAIAH, xxi: 12.

HOPE hath its dawning, and its cloud,
Love hath its cradle, and its shroud,
Joy hath its blossom, and decay,
Grief's night of weeping fades away,
The pillow bathed in tears grows dry,
And morning greets the mourner's eye.

Life hath a time to smile and grieve,
 Youth is its morn, and age its eve;
 Call not the gathering shades unblest,
 Sweet pause for memory and for rest,
 But welcome twilight meek and pale,
 And when dark evening draws its veil,
 Light up the lamps with right good will,
 Heap fuel, if your veins are chill,
 Bid holy faith be firm and bold,
 Cling to the love that ne'er grows old,
 That warms thro' life the heaven-taught guest,
 And makes its night and morning blest.

NOVEMBER IV.

"In the midst of my days."

PSALMS, cii: 24.

THE tree was in flushing with blossom and promise,
 The tree was in bearing with beauty and fruit,
 And sweet birds of song, 'mid its branches were nesting,
 And streams of affection flow'd fresh round its root.

No tempest, or cloud the horizon was threatening,
 Yet a shaft like the lightning in secrecy sped,
 The quick vital tide at its fount was arrested,
 In the midst of its days, it lay smitten and dead.

Oh! wide was the chasm of that deep desolation,
 And bitter their grief 'neath its shadow who grew,
 No more 'neath that shelter with gladness to gather,
 Or drink from its green leaves the crystalline dew.

But a voice 'mid the weeping with sorrow descended,
 The voice of the Saviour in pity and love,
 "Your tree hath not perished, its date was immortal,
 The crown of its joy blooms unfading above."

NOVEMBER V.

"The same day, Pilate and Herod were made friends together; for before, they were at enmity between themselves." LUKE, xxiii: 12.

WHAT made them friends? They, who so long had been
 Inimical, with haughty frown, or glance
 Averted, if they chanced to meet, and words
 Of bitter hatred when they were apart:
 What made them friends?

That which too often binds

Bad hearts together, earnestness in wrong,
 Congenial purpose of iniquity,
 Coincidence in crime.

There's many a league

Thus made in modern times, for secret fraud,
 And fellowship in ill, a twisted cord,
 Or blacken'd cable, by which two may draw
 Stronger in Satan's yoke. But when the work
 Of darkness that cemented them is done,
 They fall asunder, strait like smoking flax:—
 Affinity in evil doth not skill
 To forge those links of steel that bind the soul
 Firmly through every change.

Oh Lord, our strength!
 Grant that our friendship in this world may be
 A double power for good, an added warmth
 Of holy sympathy, an arm to aid
 Over rough places in our pilgrim-path,
 An eye to trace behind each gathering cloud
 Its silver lining, and a voice to speak
 Thy words of love, until we come to Thee.

NOVEMBER VI.

“Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.”

LUKE, xxiv: 29.

THE bright and blooming morn of youth
 Hath faded from the sky,
 And the fresh garlands of our hope,
 Are withered, sere, and dry,
 Oh Thou! whose being hath no end,
 Whose years can ne'er decay,
 Whose strength and wisdom are our trust,
 Abide with us, we pray.

Behold the noonday sun of life
 Sinks toward its western bound,
 And fast the lengthening shadows draw
 In heavier gloom around,
 And all the glow-worm lamps are dead
 That, kindling round our way,
 Gave fickle promises of joy,
 Abide with us, we pray.

Dim eve steals on, and many a friend
Our early path who blessed,
Wrapped in the cerements of the tomb
Have laid them down to rest;
But Thou, the everlasting Friend,
Whose Spirit's glorious ray,
Illumes the dreary vale of death,
Abide with us, we pray.

NOVEMBER VII.

"I will arise, and go to my Father."

ST. LUKE, xv: 13.

HAST thou no Father's House
Beyond this pilgrim scene,
That thus on Earth's delusive props
Thy bleeding breast doth lean?

Yet not the parents' care
Who, for their infant sigh,
When absence shuts it from their arms,
Or sickness dims its eye,

Transcends the love divine,
The welcome full and free,
With which the gracious Sire of Heaven
Will stretch His arms to thee,

When thou with contrite tear
Shalt wait within His walls,
Imploring but the broken bread
That from His table falls.

No more His mansion shun,
No more distrust His grace,
Rise from the orphanage of earth,
And meet His blest embrace.

NOVEMBER VIII.

"They shall be on the mountains, like doves of the valleys, all of them mourning."

EZEKIEL, vii : 16

DOVE of the Vale! what dost thou here?
O'er the bare mountains wandering lone,
Bleak, stranger-skies above thee spread,
And cliffs on cliffs around thee thrown.

Wandering and mourning, far away,
From genial clime, and lover dear,
Thy thrilling wail at evening's close,
And morning's earliest dawn, I hear.

Ah homeless exile! dost thou know
Through ether's trackless fields the way
To the green valley, where thy nest
Hung trembling on the curtain'd spray?

Hark! to the mountain's hollow moan,
Dark, threatening clouds a storm prepare,
Fly to the Ark that rides the wave
And find unchanging shelter there.

NOVEMBER IX.

Jesus wept."

JOHN, xi: 35

WHY weep ye, when the weary go to rest?
 When sickness ceaseth from its bitter sighing?
 Why mourn ye at the burial of the just
 With hopeless woe, the Comforter denying?
 For the disciples whom their Lord made free
 When o'er the tyrant grave, He won the victory?

Why count it evil, when affliction's dart
 Hath had its perfect work? when sorrow's rod
 Leaves its sore smiting? when the pure in heart
 Rise in their saintly righteousness to God,
 Those who have walk'd with Wisdom's heavenly train,
 And in their inmost souls believed that death was gain?

Yet is there weeping, when a just man falls,
 When a loved friend the cup of parting drinks,
 When a true watchman faints on Zion's walls,
 Or 'mid his flock a faithful shepherd sinks,
 And 'mid the living waters where he fed
 The tender, trusting lambs, doth slumber with the dead.

Our tears are pearls, by griev'd affection shed,
 Drawn from the heart's deep fount with shuddering pain,
 Yet Faith can string them on a silver thread,
 And wear them till an angel's wreath she gain,
 For Piety hath in her bosom kept,
 And on her forehead graved their sanction, "*Jesus wept.*"

NOVEMBER X.

"Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive."

JEREMIAH, xlix : 11.

THEY said she was *alone*.

But when I turn'd
To look upon her, in her arms there lay
A tender blossom of humanity
New-born and beautiful. Methought the babe
Did bear the features of its buried sire,
And at the moaning of its timid voice,
And faint, appealing smile, the stricken heart
Rose in its brokenness, and took the joy
That pays maternal care.

And then I thank'd
The Father of our Mercies, who doth watch
The widow'd heart so tenderly, and prop
The form he smiteth, and infuse some drops
Of balm of Gilead in the cup of grief,
That none may sink beneath his sharp rebuke,
But walk in patience, and in chastened hope,
On to the land which hath no need that pain
Should be the teacher of its habitants.

NOVEMBER XI.

"Thy Maker is thy Husband."

ISAIAH, liv: 5.

ART thou the bride of God?
Let no encroaching care
Disturb the current of thy thought
Or mar the espousal-prayer;
If other lords have held
Dominion o'er thy heart,
Rise, in the sanctity of truth,
And bid them all depart.

If thou wouldst please Him well,
Whose favor is thy life,
Put on the robe of lowliness,
And shun the words of strife,
Submit thyself to Him
Not doubting, not afraid,
And with an angel's smile regard
All whom His hand hath made.

Be thy first thought, His name,
At morning's earliest rays,
And when the Night its curtain draws
Thy latest word, His praise;
Rest on His arm, till Death
Prepare the burial-sod,
Oh Widow! in thy lone estate
Be thou the bride of God.

NOVEMBER XII.

"Unto them will I give in my house, and within my walls, a place and a name, better than of sons and of daughters."
 ISAIAH, lvi: 5

MOTHER of kings! with what a lofty port
 Among the nobles of the realm she reigned
 And drank the incense of a venal court,
 As though her brow a changeless crown sustained.

Mother of heroes! what a thrill of pride
 Ran through her bosom, when their fame was won;
 Such was her joy, who cradled at her side
 Our "pater patriæ," glorious Washington!

But thou, O meek and saintly one, whose tear
 In childless sorrow dewes the burial-sod,
 Far higher honor waits thy woe severe,—
 Mother of angels! stay thy soul on God.

NOVEMBER XIII.

"The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness."
 PROVERBS, xvi: 31.

GIVE honor to the hoary head
 In ways of wisdom found,
 Bright, circling rays of glory bend,
 And with its locks of silver blend,
 Encircling it around.

Give honor to the faithful dead,
 And full of reverence, bring
 Unfading memories from the dust,
 Their love to man, their loyal trust
 In their Anointed King.

Give praise to God, from whom proceeds
 Each gift and purpose high,
 Strength to the servant true and pure,
 Strength to the aged to endure,
 Strength to the saint, to die.

Give praise to God, with whom do dwell,
 In heavenly peace and rest,
 The souls of those who serv'd him here,
 With humble faith, with holy fear,
 Then soar'd above the cloud and tear,
 To be forever blest.

NOVEMBER XIV.

"They heard a great voice from Heaven, saying, Come up hither."

REVELATION, xi: 12.

YE have a land of mist and shade,
 Where specters roam at will,
 Dense clouds your mountain-cliffs pervade,
 And damps your valleys chill;
 But ne'er has midnight's wing of woe
 Eclipsed our changeless ray,
 "Come hither," if ye seek to know
 The bliss of perfect day.

Death, like the Bohemian, opens
A night when'er ye tread,
And Elysium's waiting women, doubt
The best of her business deal:
With us, no entrance for awhile
When love her home would make;
In Heaven, the welcome never fails,
"Come," and that word's paradise.

Time needs 'mid your wretched joys,
Death give your longed-for rest,
And sin your lover of your destiny,
When will ye find repose?
T'is weary in your pilgrim race,
Hurry through your pain and sin,
"Come, sister," rise to our embrace,
And Christ shall give you rest.

Two dew, methought, at twilight hour
The angel's lay came down,
Like dew upon the drooping flower,
When droughts of summer brown;
How richly o'er the summer air
Sodded wet that cross was!
Oh, when the page of death I see,
Sing ye that song to me.

NOVEMBER XV.

"As a seal upon thine heart."

SONG OF SOLOMON, viii : 6.

HAVE hearts their seals?

Yes, and their tablets too.

Where Memory writeth with her diamond pen,
 And Hope and Fancy at their own gay will
 Draw pencil-sketches, and illusive Love
 Throws shade and sunbeam. And those mystic leaves
 Have power to bring the tides of parted joy
 Back o'er the soul again, call friendship's voice
 From time's mute sepulcher, and wake the pulse
 Of age and sorrow to a thrill of joy.
 But the quick ear, thro' which the secret thought
 Came gliding to its cell, the window'd eye
 From whence the ethereal essence glancing forth,
 Held fellowship with clay, say, who could form
 Such wondrous compact of incongruous things,
 And stamp it with His likeness, save the Hand
 That struck from chaos, light?

And when it breaks

The heart's last seal, and maketh manifest
 All secrecies, all mysteries,—perchance,
 Some motive which amid the mists of earth
 Was wrongly read, shall at Heaven's call come forth
 As a rich strain of music, sweetly wrought
 Into the chorus of that Angel Hymn
 Which hath no dissonance.

NOVEMBER XVI.

"The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the Earth keep silence before him."

HABAKKUK, ii: 20.

THE Lord is on his holy throne,
He sits in kingly state;
Let those who for his favor seek,
In humble silence wait.

Your sorrows to His eye are known,
Your secret motives clear,
It needeth not the pomp of words,
To claim his listening ear.

Doth Death thy bosom's cell invade?
Yield up thy flower of grass;
Swells the world's wrathful billow high?
Bow down, and let it pass.

Press not thy purpose on thy God,
Urge not thine erring will,
Nor dictate to the Eternal mind,
Nor doubt thy Maker's skill.

True prayer is not the noisy sound
That clamorous lips repeat,
But the *deep silence* of a soul
That clasps its Father's feet.

NOVEMBER XVII.

"They shall perish, but Thou remainest."

HEBREWS, i: 11.

WHAT shall perish? Plants that flourish,
Flowerets fresh with dewy tears,
Reeds that murmuring brooklets nourish,
Oaks that brave a thousand years.

What shall perish? Thrones shall crumble,
Centuries wreck the proudest walls,
And the musing traveler stumble
O'er the Cæsars' ruin'd halls.

What shall perish? In their courses
Stars shall fall, and earth decay,
And old Ocean's mightest forces
Like a bubble fleet away.

What shall perish? Beauty's blossom
Cradled in affection's arms,
Clasp'd to love's protecting bosom,
Bright and sweet and full of charms,

Breathing fragrance o'er the hovel
Where the poor and suffering sigh,
Teaching smiles to those that grovel
Like an angel's ministry;

Grief beside its pillow mourneth,
 Friendship's tear bedews the sod,
 As the dust to dust returneth
 And the spirit soars to God.

God the Eternal! He remaineth
 Tho' stern Death all else infold,
 He the pure in heart sustaineth
 Till His glory they behold.

NOVEMBER XVIII.

"In wrath, remember mercy."

HABAKKUK, iii: 2.

SAY ye 'tis *Mercy* that doth rend
 Of hope the healthful root?
 The visitation of a *friend*
 - That blights affection's fruit?
 Yes, *Mercy*. Not that erring love
 Which man to man extends,
 But His high discipline above
 Who pain with wisdom blends.

Beyond the cloud, the pang, the tomb
 Of this terrestrial clod,
 Where trees of glory ever bloom
 Fast by the fount of God,
 Ye, in the books of heaven may read
 With seraph-students blest,
 How sorrow's sternest teachings lead
 To bowers of endless rest.

NOVEMBER XIX.

"Peace I leave with you."

JOHN, xiv : 27.

"PEACE" was the song the angels sang,
When Jesus sought this vale of tears,
And sweet that heavenly prelude rang,
To calm the wondering shepherds' fears:
"War" is the word that man hath spoke,
Convuls'd by passions dark and dread,
And vengeance bound a lawless yoke
Even where the Gospel's banner spread.

"Peace" was the prayer the Saviour breathed
When from our world his steps withdrew,
The gift He to his friends bequeathed
With Calvary and the cross in view:
And ye whose souls have felt his love,
Guard day and night this rich bequest,
The watch-word of the host above,
The passport to their realm of rest.

NOVEMBER XX.

"I have been young, and now am old."

PSALMS, xxxvii: 25.

THE sapling-twig our childhood idly bent
Maketh broad shadow, and the forest-king
That arched majestic o'er our school-day sports
Moldereth, to sprout no more.

The little babe

We as a plaything dandled, of whose frame
We spake, perchance, as most exceeding frail,
Doth nurse his children's children on his knee.
Brethren and sisters, from our grasp have fled
Like bubbles on the pool, and we are left
With life's long lessons furrowed on our brow.

Yet the true heart that hath its trust in Heaven,
Seeing its treasured things unfold their wing
And thither soar, pursues their upward flight,
And poising higher o'er this vale of tears,
Weaves from its varying tones, a song of praise.

NOVEMBER XXI.

"For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

ISAIAH, xi: 9.

NIGHT wraps the realm where Jesus woke,
No guiding-star the Magi see,
And heavy hangs Oppression's yoke,
Where *first* the Gospel said "*be free.*"

And where the harps of angels bore
High message to the shepherd throng,
"Good will and peace" are heard no more,
To murmur Bethlehem's vales along.

Swart India, with her idol train,
Bends low, by Ganges' worshiped tide,
Or drowns the Suttée's shriek of pain,
With thundering gong and pagan pride.

On Persia's hills the Sophis grope,
Dark Burmah greets Salvation's ray,
E'en jealous China's door of hope
Unbars to give the Gospel way.

Old Ocean, with his isles, awakes,
Cold Greenland feels mysterious flame,
And humbled Afric wondering takes
On her sad lips a Saviour's name.

Their steps our forest brethren stay,
Bound to Oblivion's voiceless shore,
And lift their red brows to the day,
Which from the opening skies doth pour.

Oh! aid with prayer that holy light
Which from eternal death can save,
And bid Christ's heralds speed their flight,
Ere millions find a hopeless grave.

Still in the forming hour of youth,
Combine with Education's sway
Those seeds of heaven-implanted truth,
Whose fruit can never know decay.

Kneel while unsullied joy doth glow
Resplendent on the blooming cheek,
And for the climes of heathen woe,
A blest Redeemer's pity seek.

Blend sweetly with the classic page
The love of Heaven, sublime and fair;
So Beauty's brow, though dimmed with age,
The luster of the soul shall wear.

NOVEMBER XXII.

The dead praise not the Lord."

PSALMS, CXV: 17.

DEEP dwellers 'mid those cells profound
Where dreamless slumbers reign,
No lingering sigh, or grateful sound
Breathes in your drear domain.

But ye, upon whose living eye
Creation's glory breaks,
When Memory opes the window'd sky
Or Eve her scepter takes,

To whose quick ear, a thrilling strain
Of harmony doth rise,
From warbling grove, or pine-clad plain
While Echo's voice replies,

Whose buoyant footsteps wander o'er
Fresh Summer's blooming fields,
Where glad hands cull the golden store
That lavish Autumn yields,

Praise ye the Giver of your breath
The Author of your joy,
Even till the rigid hand of death
Time's fragile harp destroy,

Till rising wheré immortal lyres
Are to your keeping given,
Ye find that ye on earth have learn'd
The melodies of heaven.

NOVEMBER XXIII.

“Lord! increase our faith.”

LUKE, xvii: 5.

PRAYER is the dew of faith,
Its rain-drop, night and day,
That guards its vital power from death
When cherish'd hopes decay,
And keeps it 'mid this changeful scene
A bright, perennial evergreen.

Good works, of faith the fruit,
Should ripen year by year,
Of health and soundness at the root
An evidence sincere;
Dear Saviour! grant Thy blessing free
And make our faith, no barren tree.

NOVEMBER XXIV.

"Whither shall I flee from Thy presence."

PSALMS, CXXXIX: 7.

TAKE morning's wing, and fly from zone to zone,
 To earth's remotest pole, and ere old Time
 Can shift one figure on his dial-plate,
 Haste to the frigid Thule of mankind,
 Where the scant life-drop freezes. Or go down
 To Ocean's secret caverns 'mid the throng
 Of monsters without number, which no foot
 Of man hath visited, and yet returned
 To walk among the living. Or the shroud
 Of midnight wrap around thee, dense and deep,
 Bidding thy spirit slumber.

Hop'st thou thus

To 'scape the Almighty, to whose piercing eye
 Morn's robe and midnight's vestments are the same?
 Spirit of truth! why should we seek to hide
 Motive or deed from thee? why strive to walk
 In a vain show before our fellow-men?
 Since at the same dread audit each must stand,
 And with a sun-ray read his brother's breast
 While his own thoughts are weighed?

Search thou my soul!

And if aught evil lurks securely there,
 Like Achan's stolen hoard, command it thence,
 And hold me up in singleness of heart,
 And simple, child-like confidence in Thee,
 Till time shall close his labyrinth and ope
 Eternity's broad gate.

NOVEMBER XXV.

"I have remembered Thy name, O Lord! in the night."

PSALMS, cxix: 55.

MIDNIGHT on the stormy ocean,
Tumult of the blast and wave,
Every shrieking shroud in motion,
None to hearken, none to save,
Every star in terror hiding,
Every refuge wrapp'd in gloom,
And a slender plank dividing
From a drear and watery tomb;
Still, Oh Lord! Thy mercy liveth,
Still Thy goodness answereth prayer,
And Thy blest remembrance giveth
Solace in that deep despair.

Midnight, and the time of weeping!
Wild the tides of anguish roll,
Pain and woe like sentries keeping
Watch above the prostrate soul,
Sympathy is weak to aid it,
Earthly comforters are vain,
Only He, the God who made it,
Can its agony restrain;
Then His love with strong dominion,
And His truth's resistless sway,
Like an angel's radiant pinion
Turneth darkness into day.

NOVEMBER XXVI.

"Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth."

1ST CORINTHIANS, viii: 1.

SPIRIT of Love, that o'er the soul of man
 Dost brood, as light from formless chaos rose,
 Let us not waste the glory of our span
 In idle dalliance with our secret foes,
 Nor let us harbor an embittered heart
 Beneath the Gospel and its garb of peace,
 Cheating ourselves of that celestial part
 For which the songs of seraphs never cease
 To praise the Holy One; nor weakly blind,
 Puff our inflated pride with windy lore
 Of fame, and see the unfed, undying mind
 Shrivel with famine: for all hoarded lore
 Of earthly knowledge is but emptiness
 Unless thy breath divine doth purify and bless.

NOVEMBER XXVII.

"The Prophets, do they live for ever?"

ZEPHARIAH, i: 5.

WHERE are the Fathers? they who chose
 'Mid these green vales, their peaceful lot?
 Here, where their favorite streamlet flows,
 We call them, but they answer not.

Where are the Fathers? Tell us where,
 By wintry fire-side, sparkling clear,
 At household board, in house of prayer,
 We seek them, but they are not here.

Where are the Prophets? Gone to rest,
 Yon hallow'd church-yard points us where,
 Yon swelling mounds in verdure drest,
 Yon silent tomb-stones sadly fair.

Where are the Prophets? Risen to God!
 Those faithful laborers for the skies,
 Oh! may we keep the path they trod,
 And join, in Heaven, earth's broken ties.

NOVEMBER XXVIII.

"The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

1ST THESSALONIANS, iii: 18.

ADVENIRE!* Advenire!
 So the prophets sang of old,
 Some, 'mid shadowy twilight groping,
 Snatching thence their visions bold,
 Some like rapt Isaiah gaining
 Snatches of a morn of gold.

* Coming.

Advenire! Advenire!

So we say though Christ hath come,
Taken here on earth a portion
Of its lowliness and gloom,
And his wondrous mission finished
On the cross and at the tomb.

Advenire! Advenire!

Still with fervent hearts we pray
For the clearer light that shineth
Onward to the Perfect Day,
And a stronger faith to guide us
Saviour, in thy steps alway.

Advenire! Advenire!

Make thy fuller purpose known,
More conform us, life and spirit,
To the pattern Thou hast shown,
Till with all Thy flock we gather
Round the footstool of Thy Throne.

NOVEMBER XXIX.

"At our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits."

SONG OF SOLOMON, vii: 13.

OH genial Autumn, in thy grave with tears
As when a good man dies, we lay thee down,
Covering thee with the verdure thou hast spared,
Pale sods and lingering flowers.

Thou didst not trust
 Thy purposed goodness to another's hand
 But raised the reaper to his harvest-song,
 Gladden'd the gleaner's heart, and o'er the board
 Of the poor peasant pour'd such fruits as made
 His pining children happy.

May our course,
 Most bounteous Autumn, like thine own be found;
 Not weakly trusting to a future race
 To execute our plans of charity
 When we are gone, and cheating our own souls
 Of the sweet bliss of pure philanthropy,
 But marking every day with kindly deeds
 Pass gently to an honor'd tomb, like thee,
 'Mid the green memories of unnumbered hearts.

NOVEMBER XXX.

"And he brought him to Jesus."

JOHN, i: 42.

UPON his brother's neck he fell,
 And tender words he said
 Such as in life's fair morn were breathed
 Upon their cradle-bed,
 When lip to lip, and hand in hand,
 They dream'd in slumber's pleasant land.

Oh blessed Andrew! first of all
The Master's call to heed,
And first to his disciples' band
An ardent soul to lead;
Fraternal Love, with heaven-born thought
First to the Cross, a convert brought.

And if there's one of kindred blood
Still to our Saviour cold,
We'll strive by that impulsive spell
To draw them to His fold,
For Love's the light that wakes the dim,
And Love, the hand that leads to Him.

But are not all on earth who dwell,
By One Creator made?
By the same bounteous care sustain'd?
And bound to Death's dark shade?
Yet urg'd to seek, ere Time be past,
For One Great Father's home at last?

Then should we look on all our race
With kind, fraternal eye,
And bid our christian brotherhood
Incite to sympathy,
Effort, and earnest prayer, that all,
May hear and heed Salvation's call.



December.

DECEMBER I.

"By the breath of God, frost is given, and the breadth of the waters is straitened."

JOB, xxxvii: 10.

SEE, o'er yon hillocks' icy heads
Steals the first winter-morning's hue,
And wreathing smoke aspiring spreads
In curling volumes, light and blue.

Oh, Giver of our fleeting days,
The changeful year is full of Thee,
Each varying season speaks Thy praise,
And so, with ardent hearts should we.

Fallen are the flowers that deck'd our path,
The birds of summer-song are fled,
And 'neath the dreary tempest's wrath
The groves lie desolate and dead;

Yet, when these charms so bright and frail
Must droop and wither and decay,
Say, is there naught to countervail
The good the Spoiler takes away?

Is there no joy to light the eye
Though beauty, youth, and health are past,
And all their boasted treasures fly
Like leaves before the wrecking blast?

Yes, there's a joy that rules the throng
Of chilling cares and sorrow's shock,
That strikes an anchor deep and strong
In Heaven's imperishable rock.

Grant me this joy, and when my soul
 Her farewell to the world shall sigh,
 When unknown seas around me roll
 And toss their thundering billows high,

When to yon snow-clad hills afar,
 To all earth's change these eyes grow dim,
 The luster of my Saviour's star
 Shall clearly guide my way to Him.

DECEMBER II.

"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

NUMBERS, xxiii: 10.

I LOOKED upon the righteous man
 And saw his parting breath
 Without a struggle or a sigh
 Yield peacefully to death,
 There was no anguish on his brow
 No terror in his eye,
 The Tyrant sped a fearful dart
 But lost the victory.

I looked upon the righteous man
 And heard a fervent prayer
 Which rose above that breathless clay
 To soothe the mourner's care,
 And felt how priceless was the gift
 He to his dear ones gave,
 The sainted memory of the just,
 A wealth beyond the grave.

I looked upon the righteous man,
 And all our earthly trust
 Its pleasure, vanity, or power
 Seem'd lighter than the dust,
 Compared with his eternal gain,
 A home above the sky :
 Oh grant us Lord, his life to live
 That we his death may die.

DECEMBER III.

“ Now see we through a glass darkly,—but then, face to face.”

1ST CORINTHIANS, xiii : 12

MIGHT we but view the shore
 Of this dim world, as from Heaven's realm it gleams,
 How should we blame the tear unduly shed,
 And tax the rootless joy. How should we see
 The grave-mounds where we wept, sown thick with flowers,
 Such as seraphic bosoms wear,—the cliff
 Where wild ambition strove, with storm-clouds crown'd,—
 Wealth's jewel'd casket, poverty,—perchance,
 His prayer who knew not where to lay his head
 A heritage of glory. Each desire
 Fed to fruition, sows it not the seeds
 Of sickness in the soul?

Prosperity

Is often but another name for pride,
 While our keen disappointments are the germ
 Of that humility which entereth Heaven,
 Finding itself at home. The things we mourn
 Work our eternal gain.

So let our joys
 Be tremulous as the mimosa's leaf,
 And each affliction with a serious smile
 Be welcomed in, at the heart's open door,
 Even as the Patriarch met his muffled guests
 And found them angels.

DECEMBER IV.

"They rest from their labors."

REVELATION, xiv : 13.

THE wreck-strewn Sea doth gladly rest
 From tempests wildly sweeping,
 The tired Earth hides in Winter's breast
 From toil of Summer-reaping,

The stream by rocky foes unvex'd
 In crystal ice-bed slumbers,
 And sweetly dreams the wearied vine
 Bow'd low with clustering numbers,

But sweeter the repose of man
 From labor and from weeping,
 When pain and prejudice and pride
 No more stern watch are keeping,

Where sounds of strife in music end
 Where light in darkness shineth,
 Where cares and fears and griefs are o'er,
 And Sin, its power resigneth.

DECEMBER V.

"His leaf, also, shall not wither."

PSALMS, i: 3.

THE rose-leaves all are scattered,
 They float upon the blast,
 Ye may not gather them again,
 Ye may not hold them fast,
 The lily withers by the stream,
 Or in the garden-glade,
 It had its time to smile and charm,
 The time hath come to fade.

But there's a changeless beauty
 That bideth storm and frost,
 And clings to Winter's hoary crown
 When the forest-glory's lost,
 It gathers richer brilliance
 As earthly flowers decay,
 The rose and lily of the soul,
 They can not fade away.

DECEMBER VI.

"Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither fruit be in the vine, the labor of the olive fail, and the fields yield no ment, the flocks be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stall. Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

HABAKKUK, iii: 17, 18.

THOUGH the fruitage, ripening fair,
 Wither and deceive our care,
 Though upon the blighting gale
 Each untimely cluster fail,

Though the furrows we have sown
 Yield but thankless weeds alone,
 Harvest-hopes in sadness flee,
 We will still rejoice in Thee.

Though the lambs our crook hath led,
 And 'mid greenest pastures fed,
 Stiffen'd in their fold should lie,
 In their stall the herd should die,
 'Mid all poverty and loss,
 Gold of promise turn'd to dross,
 Bending low the prayerful knee,
 We will find our joy in Thee.

When around our pilgrim-path
 Time shall steal in wintry wrath,
 When our fountains disappear,
 When our vines are brown and sere,
 When our props of love and trust
 Tremble and return to dust,
 Though wild blasts lay bare the tree,
 Sweetly will we rest on Thee.

DECEMBER VII.

"The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."

JAMES, v: 11.

GIVE comfort to me, Lord,
 For earthly joys decay,
 And all the columns of my trust
 Recede and melt away,

And every fount of love
By which I erst would dream
Has vanish'd 'mid the arid sands,
Like fickle summer-stream,

And every precious tree
Of friendship's cherish'd shade,
Is 'neath the woodman's sweeping axe
In utter ruin laid.

Give comfort, Lord, because
My lonely heart is weak,
And for the solace and the smile
Of sympathy doth seek,

Have pity, Lord, because
Thy mercy hath no bound,
And as my darkened day may need,
So let my strength be found.

DECEMBER VIII.

"The day goeth away, the shadows of the evening are stretched out."

JEREMIAH, vi: 4.

THE day is gone. Recall its fleeting hours
And ask of each, what good it hath achiev'd,
What fault permitted. Then, ere sleep enchain
The drowsy powers. call to its prayerful cell
Thy solitary soul.

Bid Love's light harp
 Keep silence, and the busy hand of Hope
 Rest 'mid its woven rose-buds, and pale Grief,
 With locks dishevel'd o'er her shoulders thrown,
 Stay at the entrance. These are of the earth.
 The pilgrim as he nears the Holy Land
 Tires of the caravan, whose tinkling bells
 So long resounded o'er his desert way.

Talk with the parted day, Oh musing soul,
 And Him who gave it, till the light of faith
 Kindle within, that erst on Moses' brow
 Descending from the flame-touch'd mount, reveal'd
 With whom he held communion.

DECEMBER IX.

"A handful of corn."

PSALMS, lxxii: 16.

SCATTER the corn o'er broken ground,
 When suns and dews are free,
 And ere a few brief moons are told,
 Look! what the change shall be,
 The lofty stalk, the tassel'd crown,
 The sheaves like gold that glow,
 And bread for man, and food for beast,
 Up from those kernels grow.

Scatter good thoughts on pages pure,
 With prayer and humble trust,
 And though they fail to germinate
 Till thou art laid in dust,
 Yet may it be thy lot to meet,
 When earth away hath fled,
 Glad souls before the Saviour's seat
 Who on their fruits have fed.

DECEMBER X.

"He looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

HEBREWS, xi: 10.

LOOK, to that glorious state,
 A birthright pure and free,
 Nor tremble at the temple-gate,
 Which openeth wide for thee.

Look, to those cloudless plains
 Where flowers perennial spring,
 And learn the never-dying strains
 That white-rob'd seraphs sing.

Hark! hark! the watchman calls!
 To yon blest city's height,
 Which hath foundations, and whose walls
 Its Maker decks with light.

Up, to the Tree of Life,
Nor longer weakly cling
To haunts of vanity and strife
Where fierce temptations sting.

Up, to thy kindred dear,
Who beckon from the skies,
Who wander'd once in darkness here,
But urge thee now to rise.

Dread not the Spoiler's power
To chill the vital flame,
But 'mid the darkening clouds that lower
Thy higher being claim :

For this, thy fleeting breath
With all its hopes was given,
Rise, snatch the victory from death,
And take the bliss of Heaven.

DECEMBER XI.

"My soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning."

PSALMS, CXXX: 6.

WHO watch for morn? The sufferer's eye
That sleepless marks the hours go by,
The exhausted nurse, before whose sight
Long shadows steal and day seems night,
The sailor-boy, his watch who keeps
On lonely deck, 'mid surging deeps,

And thinks, perchance, with weary tread,
 Of home, and brothers warm in bed,
 Fast by whose side he used to rest,
 Lov'd fledgelings in the parent nest.

Yes,—these rejoice, when far away
 The dawn steals on, with mantle gray,
 And all impearl'd with dew-drops sheen
 Aurora's sandals print the green.
 Yet more than sick man's feeble wail,
 Or worn-out nurse, with watching pale,
 Or mournful mariner at sea,
 Waiteth my soul, Oh Lord, for Thee,
 For health, for hope, for needful rest,
 Oh! make it by Thy presence blest.

DECEMBER XII.

" Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice."

PHILIPPIANS, iv: 4.

BE joyful, when the light
 Of youth is on thy bowers,
 The fleeting spring-tide of thy race
 Thy lodge among the flowers.

Be joyful 'mid the toils
 On life mature that wait,
 The high meridian of thy day,
 The summer of thy state.

Be joyful when the tints
 Of Autumn change the scene
 And walk amid the fallen leaves
 With countenance serene.

Be joyful, even when age
 Shall cast its chilling snow,
 And through the naked branches bid
 The stars more brightly glow.

Even, when time's finish'd year
 Shall to the grave descend,
 Rejoice in Him who gives a life
 That nevermore shall end.

DECEMBER XIII.

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be?"

2ND PETER, iii: 11.

ALL things to be dissolved?

The links that bind
 Ruler to ruled, the iron bonds of law
 Consolidated by each passing age,
 Shall there like childrens' bubbles float away?

The vast cathedral, where the emmet man
 Hath piled his stone on stone and fallen and died,
 Race after race, while still its heavenward bulk
 Cemented rose, casting on all around
 A solemn shadow, shall that leave no trace?

The solid rock, that hath borne up the weight
 Of Himalay, or Andes, since the hour
 That flying chaos freed the struggling earth,
 Yet stagger'd not nor flinch'd, shall that dispart
 In noteless atoms?

Yonder arch of blue,
 Whose mighty pillars thro' unfathomed deeps
 Strike their strong base as tho' they mock'd at time,
 The crystal orbit of the sphered stars,
 The silver palace of the queenly Moon,
 The throne and chariot of the King of Day,
 Shall all dissolve?

What then can man secure?
 The diamond armor of a holy life,
 The asbestos of the soul.

These can not burn.

DECEMBER XIV.

"First the blade, then the ear, after that, the full corn in the ear."

MARK, iv: 28.

THERE springs a shoot of tender green,
 Up in the furrowed soil,
 Just where the faithful plow hath been,
 To mark the vernal toil,

And though no blossom proudly spread
 Doth lure the florist's eye,
 It gathereth to its lowly head
 The dew-drop from the sky,

While shrouded in its bosom's fold
 Like cradled infant dear,
 There sleeps an embryo sheaf of gold,
 For ripening suns to rear.

But they who glide on blissful wing
 Amid unfading bowers,
 Who do the bidding of their King
 In brighter realms than ours,

They, with undimm'd, unerring eye,
 The priceless worth survey,
 Of those close-hidden germs that lie
 Involved in noteless clay,

They bid us watch the quickened sod,
 Refreshed by genial rain,
 And for the garner of our God
 Each plant immortal train.

DECEMBER XV.

"Songs in the house of my pilgrimage."

PSALMS, cxix: 54.

NAME me the birds that dare to sing
 When wintry tempests blow,
 When ruffian winds wild challenge fling,
 And ices to the streamlet cling,
 And check its merry flow.

The Robin, with his kindling breast?
The Thrush, musician rare?
The Martin, bold and shrill of note?
The Blackbird with his tireless throat,
Sing they, when trees are bare?

No, No; their favorite haunts are lone,
Their warbling measures still,
They all are gone, they might not stay
To meet stern Winter's iron sway,
Say, what their place can fill?

Upon their radiant plumes we muse
Beside our wintry hearth,
While dreary snows their banners toss,
What can console us for the loss
Of melody and mirth?

The unselfish deed, the gentle word,
The smile that lights the eye,
The pitying hand to want and pain
True Friendship ne'er invoked in vain,
Pure Love, that can not die;

These build a green bower in the heart
Though every branch is riven,
These have no winter in their breast,
But gladly from a lowly nest
Strike the soul's key-tone, sweet and blest,
And sing like birds of Heaven.

DECEMBER XVI.

" Rejoice evermore."

1ST THESSALONIANS, v: 16.

BE glad, my brother, when the flower
Unfolds its honied cup for thee,
And birds amid the vernal bower
Stir every leaf with minstrelsy;
Be glad, when storms of Autumn roll,
When tyrant Winter lifts his rod,
And in the silence of the soul
Give praise to God.

Be glad, when Hope around thee glows;
Even 'mid adversity or care
Pour sympathy on others' woes,
And find a strengthening solace there:
Should clouds of sorrow shade thy cot,
And make the cheering landscape sad,
Look on another's happier lot,
And be thou glad.

Be glad, when youth illumines the scene,
When years mature their burdens bear,
When thoughtful age with eye serene,
Twines almond-blossoms in thy hair.
Brother, be glad; without a fear
Take life's last Angel by the hand,
Thy herald to yon brighter sphere,
The Better Land.

DECEMBER XVII.

"Them, also, that sleep in Jesus."

1ST THESSALONIANS, iv : 14.

How rest the saints in Christ, who sleep
Far from the tempter's power?
While for their loss the mourners weep,
In lonely hall and bower?

They rest, unvexed by wildering dreams
Of mortal care and woe,
Nor wake to taste the bitter streams
That through these valleys flow.

They rest as rests the planted seed
Within its wintry tomb,
With hope from all its cerements freed,
To rise in glorious bloom.

They sleep as sleeps the wearied child
Upon its mother's breast,
Nor foe, nor fear, nor tumult wild,
Invade their peaceful rest.

Then why with grief, from year to year,
Their blessed lot deplore,
And shed the unavailing tear
For those who weep no more?

Ah, rather in their footsteps tread,
With quickened zeal and prayer,
And live as lived the holy dead,
That ye their rest may share.

DECEMBER XVIII.

"Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed time."

JEREMIAH, viii: 7.

SEE the stork laborious tending
Onward through the vaulted sky,
'Neath those aged pinions bending
That had taught his own to fly

Still his parents' burden bearing,
Patient o'er the trackless way,
Fondly for their comfort caring,
Never wearied night or day.

Father, when thy head is hoary,
When thine eye is dim with shade,
Will it be my pride and glory
Thy declining steps to aid?

Mother, when thy spirits languish,
When thy strength and youth are spent,
Shall I seek to sooth thine anguish
Thou, who o'er my cradle bent?

Ever tireless, kind and tender,
Shall I watch lest they are grieved?
And the same affections render
That I once from them received?

Blessed lesson, gentle teacher,
May it not be lost on me,
Lest a simple winged creature
Should my just reprove be.

DECEMBER XIX.

"All the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years, and he died."

GENESIS, v : 27

AND was this all? *He died!* He who beheld
The slow unfolding of centurial years,
And shook that burden off unharmed that turns
Our temples white, and in his freshness stood
While firm oaks molder'd, hath he left no trace,
Save this one line, *he died!*

What mighty plans
Might in that time-defying bosom spring,
And wear their harvest diadem, while we
In the poor hour-glass of our seventy years
Scarce see the bloom of a few plants of hope
Ere we are laid beside them, dust to dust.

Oh, gay flower-gatherers on this crumbling brink
Howe'er amid thick bowers ye hide, and think
To let the pale king pass, it will be said
Of you, as of earth's oldest man,—*he died!*
Add to your epitaph,—*he lived to God.*

DECEMBER XX.

Blessed is He that waiteth."

DANIEL, xii : 12.

DRAWING near the western gate,
Wait, my brother, bravely wait,
Death, that ends this mortal strife,
Doth he not accomplish life?

On thy soul its armor brace,
 Look him fearless in the face,
 All his boasted power defy,
 Meet him with unclouded eye,
 As the messenger who brings
 Passport from the King of kings.

Drawing near the western gate,
 Wait, my sister, calmly wait,
 Through all changes, dark or bright,
 Mercy kept thee in its sight,
 Tempered wisely every blast,
 Will it cast thee off at last?
 Comes that form, who silent led
 Many a loved one to the dead?
 Put thy hand in his, and see
 What deliverance waits for thee.

DECEMBER XXI.

“The night cometh, when no man can work.”

JOHN, ix : 4.

FROM us, if every fleeting hour
 Improvement's boon doth ask,
 The *Shortest Day* may surely claim
 Its own peculiar task,

The *Shortest Day*,—let Morning's eye
 Its sacred rule repeat,
 And Evening's thoughtful ministry
 Enforce the lesson sweet,

Patient to render good to all
 Within our bounded sphere,
 The gentle word, the active deed,
 The sympathizing tear,

Uplift the heart to Him who gives
 Our path with hope to shine,
 Gladly receive each cup of joy
 Or tranquilly resign ;

For duties such as these shall bear
 'Mid all our cares and fears
 The soul above the flight of time,
 With all its measured years.

DECEMBER XXII.

"Call the Sabbath a delight."

ISAIAH, lviii: 13.

To meet its earliest ray with praise,
 For mercies rich and great,
 To muse in holy silence on
 Our everlasting state,

To talk with those who o'er the flood
 Of Death have gone before,
 And deeper plant within our soul
 The heaven-lit smile they wore,

To bare the heart to Him who brings
 Pure water from the rock,
 And join within His temple-gates
 The worship of his flock,

The vanity and burdening care
 Of earth aside to lay,
 That like the robe of Nessus burns
 The life of life away,

With breath of solitary thought
 To fan Devotion's flames,
 This is their privilege, who yield
To God the day He claims.

DECEMBER XXIII.

"God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

REVELATION, vii: 17.

THE mother's kiss consoles the babe
 That weeps in helpless grief,
 And for the troubles of the child
 Brings smiles of sweet relief,
 Yet still those quickly banish'd tears
 Are like the April rain,
 Beneath the polish'd lids they swell,
 And back they come again.

The friend beside his sorrowing friend
 With sympathy sincere,
 Divides the pang, returns the sigh,
 And stays the bitter tear,
 Yet o'er the fountain of the heart
 That soothing spell is vain,
 A new affliction stirs its depths
 And forth they gush again.

Tho' Love and Friendship's hallowed force
 May quell the tides of woe,
 Each passing hour retains the power
 To bid its surges flow,
 But they who take a blessed flight
 Above those realms of pain,
 Whose tears the hand of God hath dried,
 Shall never weep again.

DECEMBER XXIV.

"Freely ye have received, freely give."

MATTHEW, x: 8.

GIVE prayers; the morning hath begun;
 Be earlier than the rising sun;
 Remember those who feel the rod,
 Remember those who know not God;
 His hand can boundless blessings give:
 Breathe prayers; through them the soul shall live.

Give alms: the needy sink with pain,
 The orphans mourn, the crushed complain.
 Give freely: hoarded gold is curst,
 A prey to robbers and to rust,
 Christ, through his poor, a claim doth make;
 Give gladly, for thy Saviour's sake.

Give books: they live when thou art dead,
 Light on the darkened mind they shed,
 Good seed they sow, from age to age,
 Through all this mortal pilgrimage,
 They nurse the germs of holy trust,
 They wake untired when we are dust.

Give smiles, to cheer the little child,
A stranger on this thorny wild,—
It bringeth love, its guard to be,
It, helpless, asketh love from thee.
Howe'er by fortune's gifts unblest,
Give smiles to childhood's guileless breast.

Give words, kind words, to those who err;
Remorse doth need a comforter.
Though in temptation's wiles they fall,
Condemn not,—we are sinners all:
With the sweet charity of speech,
Give words that heal, and words that teach.

Give thought, give energy, to themes
That perish not like baseless dreams.
Hark! from the islands of the sea,
The missionary cries to thee,
To aid him on a heathen soil,
Give thought, give energy, give toil.

DECEMBER XXV.

"Lo! the star which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was."
MATTHEW, ii: 9.

WHY did it leave its ancient sphere,
Yon sentinel on high?
That at creation's morning swell'd
The anthem of the sky?

Why paus'd it on its new career
Ere the far goal was won?
As erst the sun and moon stood still,
On awe-struck Ajalon.

Why turn'd it thus with earnest beam
Toward humbled Palestine,
Where Bethlehem of Judea spread
Its narrow, noteless line?

The searching eye of man survey'd
In that sequestered vale,
A manger-bed, a helpless babe,
A mother, pure and pale,

But thou, with glance serene, didst scan,
Through all this strange disguise,
Him, who the Eternal counsels shared,
The ruler of the skies,

Though wondering angels might not read
The secrets of His will,
Thou, watcher at the Gate of Heaven,
Didst homage, and wert still.

DECEMBER XXVI.

“Out of the depths.”

PSALMS, CXXX: 1.

WHOM would you choose, as comforter in grief?
To sit beside you, when the heart gave way?
Those who have never wept?

A single tear

From a poor menial's eye, hath more of balm
Than all their pomp of verbiage. I'm afraid
Of those who never mourned. I know not how
To meet their unbowed natures. Nurs'd in pride,
And puff'd with wine and perfume of the world,
What reck they of the agony of souls
“Salted with fire?”

No doubt the friends of Job,
Sleek and well-favor'd, failed to comprehend
His plunge from princely wealth to poverty,
The silence of a home that had no child,
The loathed sickness creeping o'er the frame,
The wifely tempting, the intense despair,
That mastering patience, forc'd his bitter groan
Out of the depths. Hence they selected themes
Inapposite, swelling the sufferer's woe,
Till God from out the whirlwind, answered them.
Sorrow that rends and wrings the human heart
Ripeneth its sympathies. May not this be
One reason for its discipline from Him
Who is so pitiful? that we may learn
Better to soothe and serve our stricken race
Amid the nameless ills that all partake?

DECEMBER XXVII.

“As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon, and Andrew his brother, casting a net, for they were fishers,—and said, ‘Come ye after me.’”

MARK, i: 16 17

PARENTS, musing in your homes,
 Know ye what your sons have done?
 What a treasure they have found?
 What an honor they have won?

Not Judea's pontiff crown,
 Not the tyrant Roman's meed,
 Not the glittering spoil of gold,
 Those were fleeting gains indeed.

While with toil their net they spread
 Thoughtful by the billowy tide,
 Girded with their fisher's coat,
 Jesus call'd them to his side,

Call'd them, first of all the band,
 Who should touch the world with flame,
 He, who came the lost to save,
 Call'd them, and they trustful came.

When this earth shall pass away,
 When its sun is lost in shade,
 May it then of us be said,
 Jesus call'd and they obey'd.

DECEMBER XXVIII.

“When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord.”

JONAH, ii: 7.

ALONE I sate, by the waning lamp,
 'Mid the lull of the tempest's strife,
At the fading hour of the dying year,
 And the fading time of life,

And I thought of the hearts that had ceased to beat
 Where my love was once garner'd strong,
And I counted the friends who had gone to the dead,
 A mute, and a mournful throng;

Their's were the hands that were clasp'd with mine
 When existence was new and fair,
Their's were the arms upon which I lean'd,
 In the burdening years of care:

And my soul had fainted beneath its load,
 For the eyes with tears were dim,
Had it not remember'd the Lord our Rock,
 And strengthen'd itself in Him.

DECEMBER XXIX.

"Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years."

GALATIANS, iv: 10.

HE glideth slow away,
The Old Year, lone and grey,
 Kind and good,
He hath given us all he had,
He would fain have made us glad,
 If he could.

To the ages that are past,
On the wild and wintry blast
 He hath sped,
And they utter as they fly,
"Praise! praise," to God on high,
Like an angel's solemn cry
 From the dead.

He brought us merry cheer,
Brought us blessings rich and dear,
 And his hand
If it robed our joys in gloom
Pointed upward o'er the tomb,
Where the flowers in fadeless bloom
 Ever stand.

But our years, both new and old,
Will be number'd soon, and told,
And the lamp in socket cold
 Cease to burn,

Yet with faith that quells despair,
 Still, in every woe and care,
 Unto Him that heareth prayer,
 Let us turn.

DECEMBER XXX.

"They told him that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by"

LUCAS viii: 37.

WATCHER, untired by the bed of pain
 While the stars sweep on with their midnight train,
 Stifling the tear for thy loved one's sake,
 Holding thy breath lest her sleep should break,
 In the loneliest hour there's a helper nigh,
 Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.

Stranger, afar from thy Native Land
 Whom no one takes with a brother's hand,
 Table and hearth-stone are glowing free,
 Casements are sparkling, but not for thee:
 There is one who can tell of a home on high,
 Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.

Sad one, in secret bending low,
 A dart in thy breast that the world may not know,
 Striving the favor of God to win,
 His seal of pardon for days of sin,
 Press on, press on, with thy prayerful cry,
 Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.

Mourner, who turn'st to the church-yard lone
 Scanning the lines on yon marble stone,
 Plucking the weeds from thy childrens' bed
 Planting the myrtle and rose instead,
 Raise from their pillow thy tearful eye,
 Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.

Fading One, with the hectic streak,
 In thy veins of fire and thy wasted cheek,
 Fear'st thou the shade of the darkened vale?
 Look to the Friend who can never fail;
 He hath trod it himself, He will hear thy sigh,
 Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.

DECEMBER XXXI.

"So teach us to number our days."

PSALMS, xc: 12.

THOU dying Year! Thou dying Year!
 I watch thy parting pang,
 Draw the broad curtain round thy head,
 And o'er thy pillow hang:
 Without, the wintry frost is keen,
 The pale moon dons her mantle sheen,
 Within, the waning lamp burns drear,
 And thy deep gasping wounds my ear.

Thine hour hath come, the midnight-bell
Sounds from yon tower its mournful knell,
Kind, cherish'd friend, farewell! farewell!
One sigh, one moan, and all is o'er,
Save dim Oblivion's phantom-shore.

Yet still thy tender memories twine
With the strong roots of hope and fear,
And that recording scroll of thine
Must bear, where myriad souls appear,
Deep witness to the Judge's ear.

Nay, frown not thus, to Him I fly,
Who holds the keys of earth and sky,
And never to His ear, in vain,
Was breathed the contrite sinner's cry,
So haste thee to thy shadowy train,
For I will trust Him till I die.

